# Key witness in ₱2.3-B tax credit scam withdraws

Story on PAGE A2

## 353 imported lovebirds put to sleep, burned

MORE than 300 imported lovebirds from Europe that passed through bird flu-infected Thailand on their way to the Philippines were burned yesterday because of fears they could have been infected by the virus.

Bird flu has killed at least five people in Thailand, which is among 10 Asian governments battling the virus in recent

353 IMPORTED/ A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

## Compensation bill may benefit Marcos

**By Dona Z. Pazzibugan**

THE LATE dictator Ferdinand Marcos a victim of human rights abuse?

A loophole in the compensation bill passed by the House

COMPENSATION/ A18

ANO BA YAN?
PATI KALABAN
NAKINABANG!

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Tuesday, February 10, 2004 ★★ 46 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 64 P15
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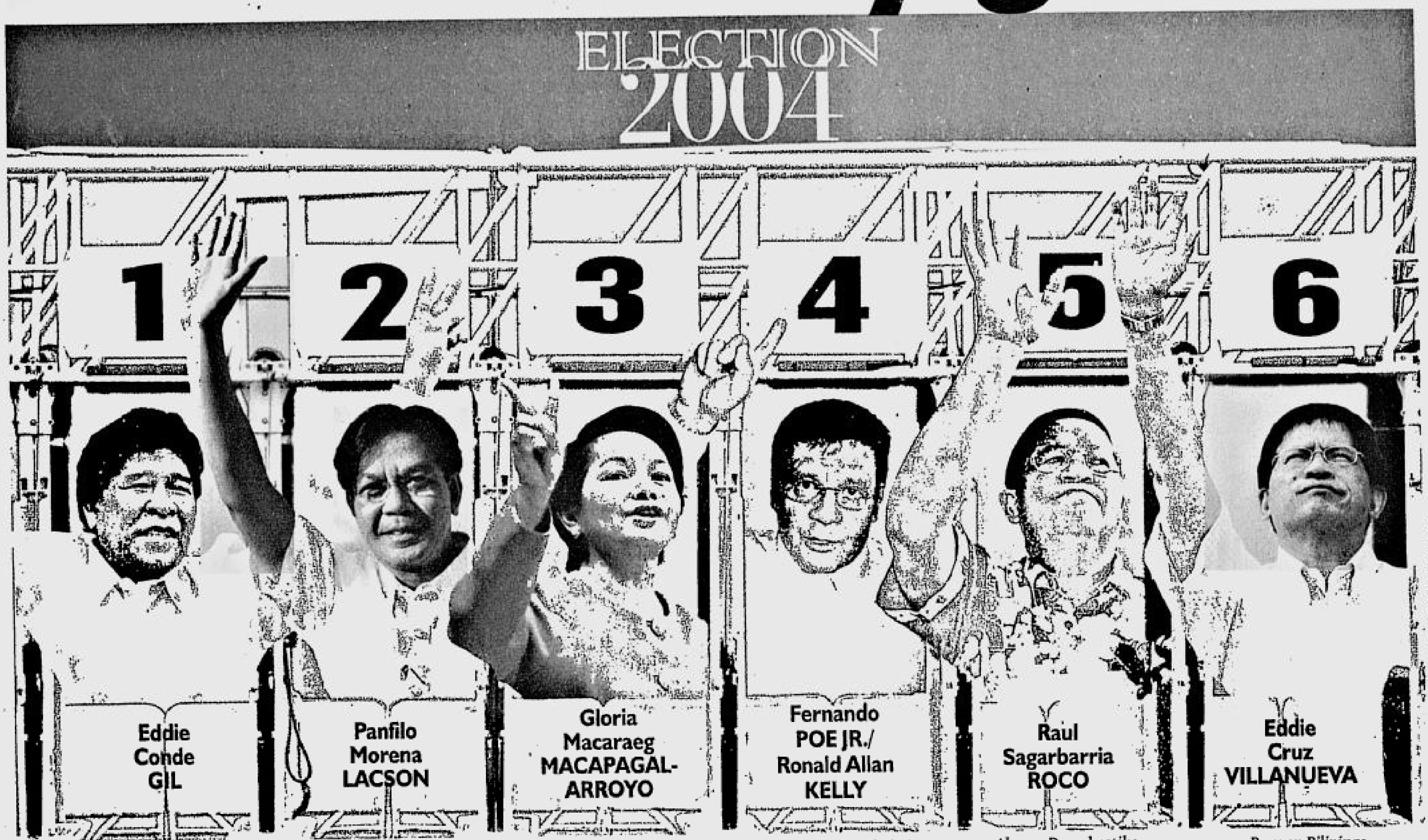
# There they go...



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*Partido Isang Bansa Isang Diwa* — *Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP)* — *Lakas-CMD / K-4* — *Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino(KNP)* — *Aksyon Demokratiko-Alyansa ng Pag-asa* — *Bangon Pilipinas*

## *90-day campaign period starts for national bets*

**By Michael Lim Ubac, Juliet L. Javellana, Norman Bordadora and Christine O. Avendaño**

**THE MOST contentious political exercise since the 1986 snap election officially gets under way today, with all the presidential candidates launching their bids in various parts of vote-rich Luzon.**

Three are kicking off their campaigns with high-profile Masses; preacher Eddie Villanueva will launch his bid tomorrow at 6 p.m., with a Bangon Pilipinas convention at the Araneta Center in Quezon City.

Candidates for national elective office have three months to campaign, while local candidates enjoy a shorter 45-day campaign period.

The chair of the Commission on Elections, Benjamin Abalos, said he expected the candidates and their supporters to observe the rules, especially in the posting of campaign materials. Comelec deputies will arrest violators "on sight," he said.

"We have alerted all agencies. Arrest on sight those seen posting illegal campaign materials," Abalos said, noting that the Comelec has deputized the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces.

Even ordinary citizens can make their own arrests, Abalos said, but added that citizens would be better advised to simply

THERE/ A17

## Defensor: De Castro not quitting for Roco

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio**

REPORTS that Sen. Noli de Castro is withdrawing from the vice presidential race to give way to former Sen. Raul Roco as President Macapagal-Arroyo's new running mate are unfounded, Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor said yesterday.

"There's no truth to this. This rumor may have been peddled by President Macapagal-Arroyo's political rivals," Defensor said in a statement. "Noli will continue to be K-4's bet for the vice presidency and he will be the next vice president of the country."

Ms Macapagal's camp received reports that rumors about De Castro's withdrawal were circulating in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Defensor said the rumor was intended to project De Castro as no longer in the running for the No. 2 position. "I spoke to Senator De

DEFENSOR/ A18

## Coming soon on TV: Battle of campaign ads

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Cynthia D. Balana**

EXPECT a touch of Hollywood in the TV campaign commercials of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and the time-tested charisma of children in those of her closest political rival, Fernando Poe Jr.

Ms Macapagal's campaign team has tapped an unnamed Hollywood advertising agency to provide inputs largely for her TV ads. To make sure that the ads "connect" with Filipino voters, it employed the services of a major Filipino agency that produced Poe's famous San Miguel Beer ad campaign, "Iba ang May Pinagsamahan," which established and maintained the bond between the movie idol and the beer brand for over a decade.

These moves, according to Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor, show how

COMING SOON/ A17

EDWIN BACASMAS

**THIS time it's personal as vice presidential rivals, Senators Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda, take a break from politics to attend the wedding of De Castro's adopted daughter Katherine.**

## Noli, Loren shelve fight for wedding

**By Volt Contreras**

BEFORE THE battle, a wedding.

Senators Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda behaved Sunday night like the old friends they are and pushed to the back burner what is expected to be a bruising fight for the vice presidency.

The occasion was the wedding of De Castro's adopted daughter, ABS-CBN reporter Katherine, to her office mate, Eric Cruz, at which Legarda stood as one of the principal sponsors. The ceremony and reception, held at the St. Francis de Assisi Chapel and the picturesque Fernwood Gardens in Quezon City, became a grand social gathering of political and media VIPs.

De Castro, running mate of President Macapagal-Arroyo, eagerly greeted Legarda's arrival. The two, newsreaders at ABS-CBN before they entered politics, gamely posed for the media cameras as they engaged in a brief private conversation.

"Friendship can never be broken by political battles," Legarda, running mate of actor Fernando Poe Jr., told the INQUIRER later.

She said that her ties with De

NOLI/ A17

## CPP rival says peace negotiations to collapse

**By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*
**and Cynthia D. Balana**

BROWNIE points are what the government and the communist-led National Democratic Front want in the resumption of the peace talks in Oslo, Norway, a breakaway group of the Communist Party of the Philippines said yesterday.

"Both the government and NDF will use the resumption of the talks to earn brownie points and propaganda mileage," the Partido ng Manggagawang Pilipino (PMP) said through its spokesperson Patricio Ramirez.

"Neither is interested in using the peace talks to truly negotiate substantial reforms," said Ramirez, who predicted the collapse of the talks.

The PMP is an underground labor group founded by the late Filemon "Ka Popoy" Lagman, one of the communist rebels who challenged the leadership of CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, now in exile in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Chief government negotiator Silvestre Bello III said on Sunday that the government wanted to sign a final agreement with the communist rebels before the May 10 elections, but his counterpart in the NDF said the timetable was "not realistic."

Speaking over dzRH radio by telephone from his base in Utrecht, chief NDF negotiator Luis Jalandoni said yesterday, on the eve of the four-day formal negotiations, that the two sides would be lucky to complete 50 percent of the issues on the table before then.

Brownie points for President Macapagal-Arroyo, a candidate in the presidential race, was also on the mind of CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal.

"It's now obvious that she [the Presi-

CPP/ A18

**WEATHER FORECAST**

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rains. Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rains.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/10/04

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Manila | Partly Cloudy | Iloilo/Bacolod | Cloudy with Rains |
| Baguio | Cloudy with Rains | Roxas | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tuguegarao | Cloudy with Rains | Cebu | Cloudy with Rains |
| Laoag | Cloudy with Rains | Tacloban | Cloudy with Rains |
| Clark Zone | Partly Cloudy | Gen. Santos | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tagaytay | Cloudy with Rains | Zamboanga | Cloudy with Rains |
| Legazpi | Cloudy with Rains | Cagayan de Oro | Cloudy with Rains |
| Calapan | Cloudy with Rains | Davao | Cloudy with Rains |

# Key witness in tax scam withdraws

## Task Force 156 accused of bungling case; usec denies charges

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

**A KEY witness in the P2.3-billion tax credit certificates scam said yesterday he was withdrawing from the investigation to protest government bungling of the probe.**

Felix Chingkoe, former president of the Chingkoe Group of Companies, accused Special Presidential Task Force 156 of deliberately weakening the cases by "burning" crucial witnesses in the tax credit scam allegedly perpetrated by his brother and sister-in-law, Faustino and Gloria Chingkoe.

### Immunity for sale?

Felix Chingkoe also accused Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer Jr., vice chair of the task force, of attempting "to sell" the immunity Felix had been seeking from the government in exchange for his help in the investigation.

"The task force has burned two important witnesses. One was Rodrigo Garcia, a former manager of one of the Chingkoe companies, and the other was my wife Rosita Chingkoe. The two were asked to assist the government in nailing down the tax syndicate but instead they were named respondents in two separate cases. Other witnesses are now afraid to testify as a result," Felix said in an interview.

The government estimated it had been defrauded of P5.3 billion in revenues as a result of the tax scam. The task force reported to Malacañang that it had filed 622 cases against 18 companies involved in the fraud.

Malacañang yesterday promised it would not stop going after tax cheats until the perpetrators had been made to pay all their tax delinquencies.

In a statement, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the administration's campaign against tax cheats would not end with the filing of charges in court.

### 'Garbage'

"We will religiously monitor the progress of all the cases filed until we are assured of payment of all taxes due the government," Bunye said.

But Felix said most of the cases were "garbage."

He cited in particular the cases filed by the task force against Express Colour Industries Inc. before the Ombudsman on Jan. 30. The task force said Express Colour was found to have obtained eight spurious tax credit certificates amounting to P46.9 million.

But Felix said that in the documents he prepared for the task force, Express Colour was found to have obtained 25 spurious tax certificates amounting to P175.38 million.

Ferrer yesterday denied Chingkoe's allegation that the task force was "selling immunity."

### Guilty

"Only the Ombudsman can issue immunity and we can only recommend. The task force had recommended immunity for Felix and Rosita Chingkoe. If he is not satisfied that up to now he has not been granted immunity, then that is his problem," Ferrer said.

The undersecretary also pointed out that a request for immunity would mean that the person requesting it was guilty, "because an innocent person would never request immunity."

"This is why during a hearing of the Congress committee on good governance in the past, the committee asked why we were requesting immunity for Felix and his wife when he had not been charged with any crime," Ferrer said.

Ferrer also said Felix's decision to withdraw from the probe would not affect the task force's investigation.

"We have other witnesses and documentary evidence. Felix Chingkoe cannot dictate on the task force, which is an inter-agency body, how to handle this case," he said.

Ferrer used to be a senior partner at the influential Cruz and Villaraza Law Offices. He became finance undersecretary in April 2002.

Felix said Ferrer asked him last year to hire lawyer Lucito Tan to help facilitate his and his wife's immunity. According to Felix, Tan is also a former partner at Cruz and Villaraza, as is Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo in whose office the request for immunity remains pending.

### Text messages

"Ferrer told me that if I did not hire Tan, I could not get the immunity," Felix said. He said Tan was charging him an acceptance fee of P500,000 and P1 million once immunity was granted.

Felix kept the text messages his wife Rosita received from Ferrer. One message read: "Pls discus wd Chito his fees separate from me. The immunity wil be handled by Chito, not Buni Uranza who is Task Force 156 lawyer. Chito is close 2 Marcelo, Customs." Chito is the nickname of Lucito.

Felix said that after sending the text messages to Rosita, Ferrer changed his cell phone number.

Ferrer has denied Chingkoe's allegations. He also denied offering Felix a lawyer. He admitted knowing Tan but insisted he was "just one of the many lawyers I know." He said they had worked together at the Cruz and Villaraza firm in the mid-90s.

"Attorney Ellen Veza was one of the lawyers of Felix Chingkoe after he changed his lawyers many times. Veza referred Lucito Tan to Felix because she wanted out as Felix's lawyer. Veza and Tan worked together in Caloocan. I did not refer Tan to Felix," Ferrer had said in an earlier text message to the INQUIRER.

The task force was created during the Estrada administration in 1999 to get to the bottom of the multibillion-peso tax credit certificate scam that was perpetrated during the Ramos administration.

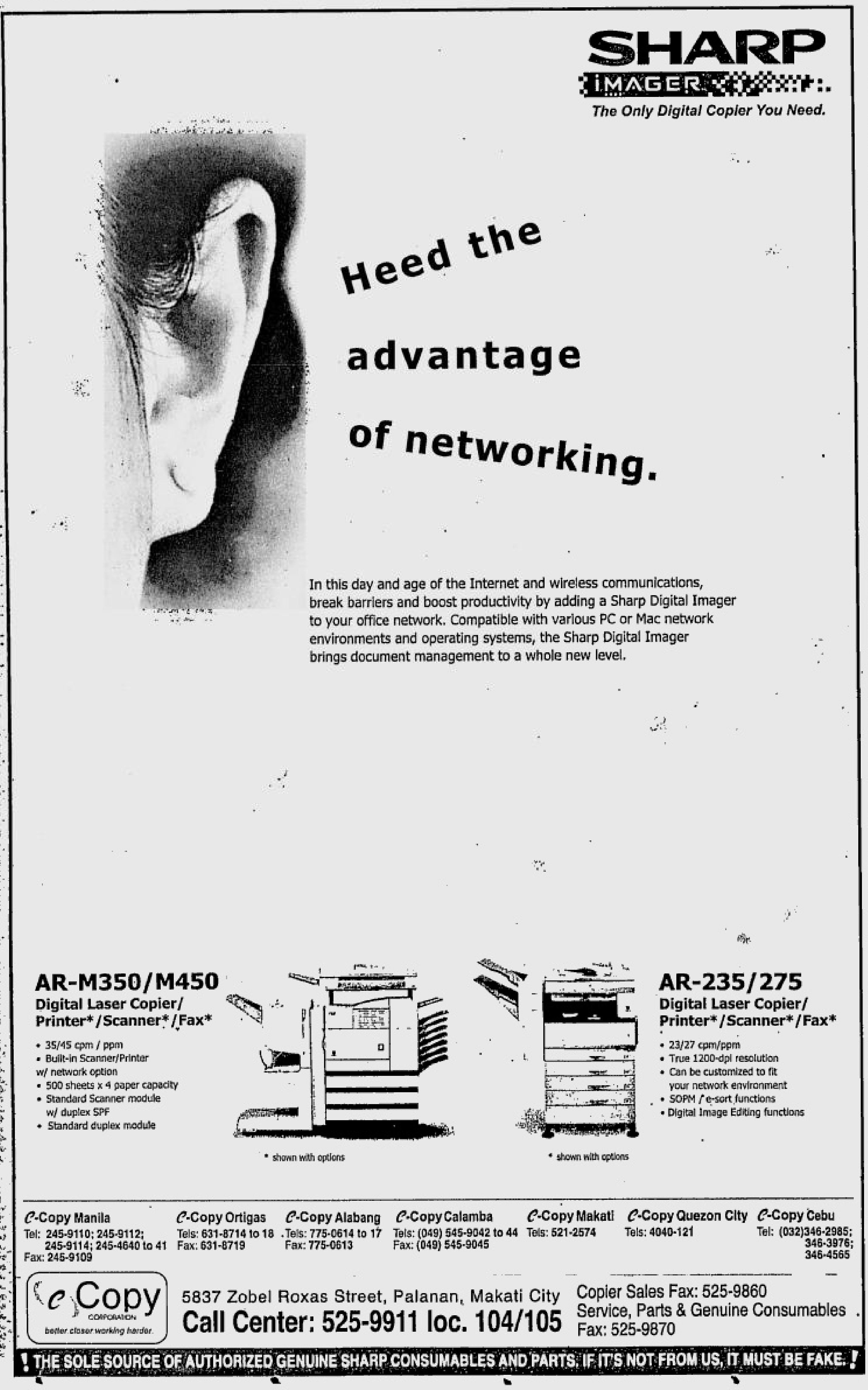
The scam involved 16 officials of the Department of Finance who worked at the One-Stop Shop Center, an inter-agency group composed of the DOF, the Bureaus of Internal Revenue and Customs, and the Board of Investments, which was set up to issue tax credit certificates to exporters as an incentive.

### P5.3-B tax credits spurious

Of the P60 billion in tax credit certificates issued, P5.3-billion was believed to have been spurious. And of the questionable tax credit certificates, about P2.3 billion were identified as having been issued to 11 unqualified Chingkoe companies between 1994 and 1998.

The Chingkoes allegedly sold the spurious tax credit certificates, with more than half going to Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell, which reportedly used them to pay their tax obligations to the BIR and customs.

Felix said he was ousted by his brother Faustino from the company in 1994. But he was familiar with the operations of the Chingkoe Group, having been its president, and so agreed to help the government in its probe. *With Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*



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# Opposition seeks filing of charges vs Manapat

**By Michael Lim Ubac**
**and Christine O. Avendaño**

WITH THE FUROR over its "minority report" continuing, the opposition in the Senate yesterday formally sought the indictment of sacked National Archives Director Ricardo Manapat for the alleged fabrication of the citizenship records of presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

The minority led by Sen. Edgardo Angara also sought the immediate issuance of a hold-departure order against Manapat by the Bureau of Immigration to prevent him from leaving the country.

Manapat had fled the Philippines when Joseph Estrada became President in 1998. He was then facing graft charges for alleged misuse of Philippine Coconut Authority funds.

In separate letters, Angara, through lawyer Demaree J.B. Raval, referred the report to Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, Presidential Anti-Graft Commission Chair Dario Rama, Commission on Elections Clerk Josefina de la Cruz, SC Clerk of Court Luzviminda Puno, Integrated Bar of the Philippines Commission on Bar Discipline Chair Rogelio Vinluan and Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez.

Angara chairs the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws, while Raval serves as its general counsel.

Attached to the letters were the controversial Committee Report No. 517, with its annexes, and the transcript of stenographic notes of the Senate hearings conducted on Jan. 21 and Feb. 2, 2004.

Angara and the other opposition senators continued to insist that Committee Report No. 517, which recommends the criminal and administrative prosecution of Manapat, had been adopted by the Senate during its late-night session on Friday.

During the voting, nine senators, including administration Sen. Juan Flavier, voted to adopt the report, but an equal number of administration senators abstained.

Since no one objected to his motion to adopt the report, the motion was carried, said Angara in an interview over the weekend.

"Parliamentary procedures, Senate rules and high court jurisprudence dictate that abstentions are not counted as negative votes," he said.

In an interview yesterday, Sen. Joker Arroyo stood by the position of Senate President Franklin Drilon and Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan that the motion had not been carried.

Arroyo said the Senate minutes would show that there had been no ruling by the chair that Committee Report No. 517 had been adopted.

# Saycon to snub NBI probe

**By Leila B. Salaverria**
**and Alcuin Papa**

PASTOR "Boy" Saycon, secretary general of the Council on Philippine Affairs will not appear at the National Bureau of Investigation office, which is conducting a probe of the Kawal Pilipino press conference.

Saycon's lawyer Frank Chavez told the INQUIRER yesterday that the NBI has no power to conduct a preliminary investigation and that it was simply on a "fishing expedition." He informed the bureau through a letter that Saycon will not heed the NBI's subpoena because the Copa official has not done anything wrong.

"If the NBI has the necessary evidence, it should just file (a case) before the fiscal," Chavez said in a phone interview. He added that the NBI would be guilty of usurpation of authority should they force Saycon to heed their summons.

NBI Special Task Force chief Marianito Panganiban said Saycon was subpoenaed so he could shed light on the Jan. 9 meeting at the Manila Polo Club where the Copa official allegedly spoke with several military officers, two of whom had sent affidavits to the NBI.

Panganiban said the NBI is just conducting a fact-finding mission regarding Kawal Pilipino and will not be pinning charges against Saycon.

"We're not conducting an investigation with any particular charge in mind," he said.

Chavez said that his client will appear at the Department of Justice only if he is served the proper papers. Saycon still has not been given a copy of the statement made by Baltazar Asadon, who accused the Copa secretary general of being behind the press conference.

In yesterday's pre-trial hearing for the court-martial of Kawal Pilipino soldiers, Army Captains Navarro, Rembert Baylosis and Philip Esmeralda, through their lawyer Marc Anthony Antonio, wanted to know if their former comrades Army Captains Moh-Yusop Hassan, Marcos Serafica and Asadon, had been forced into turning state witnesses.

Navarro, Baylosis and Esmeralda face court martial for violation of Article of War 96 (Conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman) and Article of War 97 (Acts prejudicial to good order and military discipline).

Although Hassan and Serafica are no longer under court martial, all six face criminal charges for defacing the flag and are under investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation.

# Lakas picks 'Jose Pidal'; solon bolts ruling party

**By Carlito Pablo**

"THEY pushed me against the wall; I've had enough."

A frustrated Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr. (Lakas, Negros Occidental) thus poured his heart out yesterday as he resigned from the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

One of a few politicians who organized Lakas in 1992 with then presidential aspirant Fidel V. Ramos, Lozada did not say in his press statement which party he was crossing over to. But yesterday morning, he was spotted at the inauguration of actor Fernando Poe Jr.'s campaign headquarters in Mandaluyong.

Lozada said he was "forced" to leave after he was "stripped" of his positions as Lakas vice president for international affairs and provincial chair for Negros Occidental.

"As if this humiliation (were) not enough," he added, President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino party endorsed Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, brother of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, as candidate for the province's fifth congressional district to challenge Lozada's reelection bid.

The younger Arroyo had publicly admitted to using the alias "Jose Pidal," who was accused by Sen. Panfilo Lacson of laundering money. Lacson maintains that Mike Arroyo, not Iggy, is the real Jose Pidal.

Lozada sought clarification from party officials about his status, Lozada said. "Unfortunately, I was ignored."

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We are held together by a common reverence for the freedom of expression guaranteed by our constitution which self-anointed betters have been strangling for generations with ill-concealed coercion, censorship and scandalously oppresive taxes. We have been left with little besides our own abiding passion for the work we do, and with it, the absolute certainty the culture does not deserve to be trusted unless it is free.

We hold that our medium, at its best as well as at its worst, has always served as a true mirror of the state of our society, its splendor and squalor, its beauty and its baseness. We do not do political double-speak; we look at ourselves without flinching, and thus describe the real threats to the country's integrity. We do not drown the public in a flood of self-serving statistics. Through works screened locally and internationally, we call a spade, a spade.

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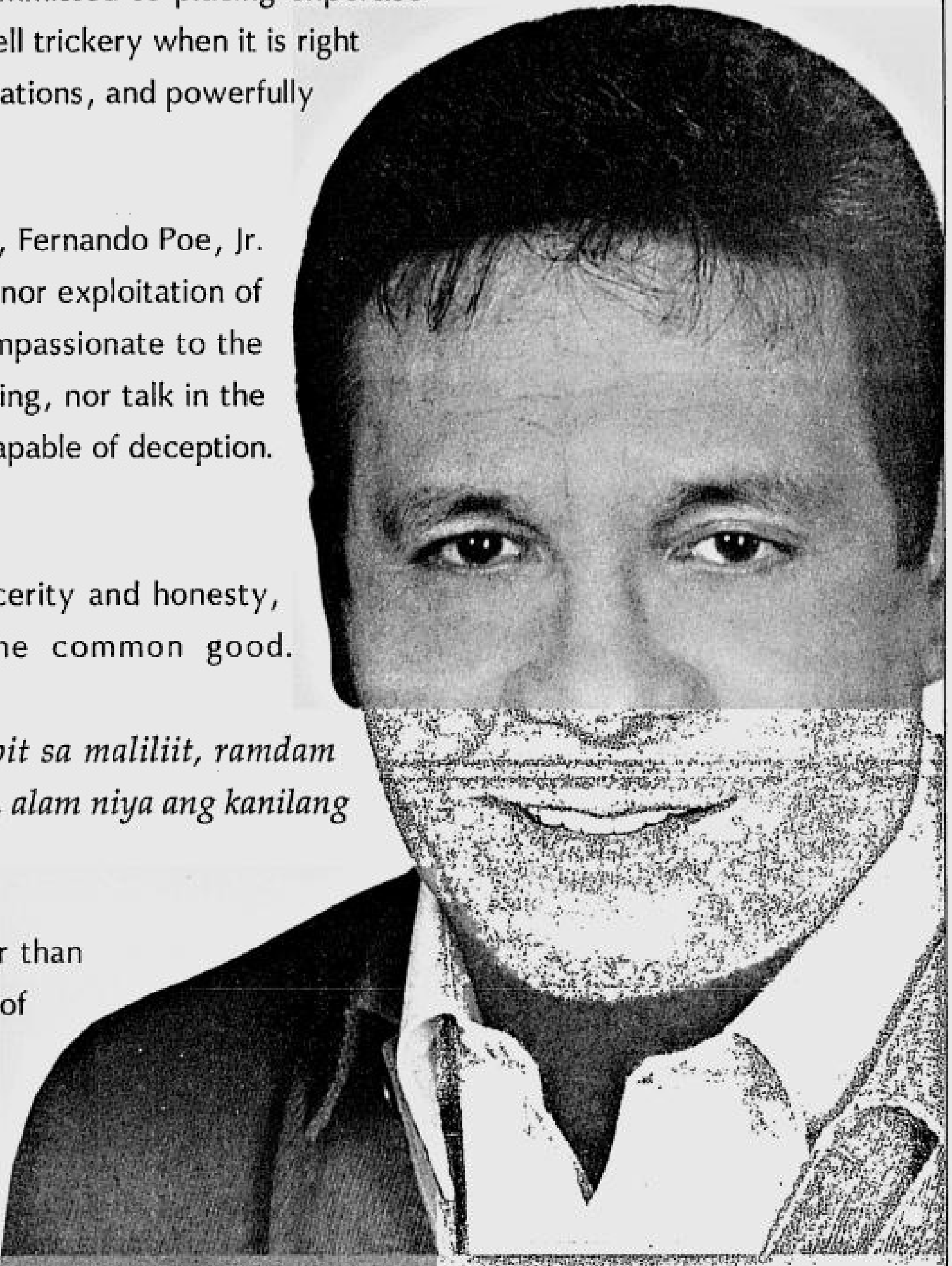

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# DECLARATION OF FAITH

We are Filipino artists, workers and representatives of the motion picture industry of film and television, from all levels of society and of various ideological persuasions.

We are held together by a common reverence for the freedom of expression guaranteed by our constitution which self-anointed betters have been strangling for generations with ill-concealed coercion, censorship and scandalously oppresive taxes. We have been left with little besides our own abiding passion for the work we do, and with it, the absolute certainty the culture does not deserve to be trusted unless it is free.

We hold that our medium, at its best as well as at its worst, has always served as a true mirror of the state of our society, its splendor and squalor, its beauty and its baseness. We do not do political double-speak; we look at ourselves without flinching, and thus describe the real threats to the country's integrity. We do not drown the public in a flood of self-serving statistics. Through works screened locally and internationally, we call a spade, a spade.

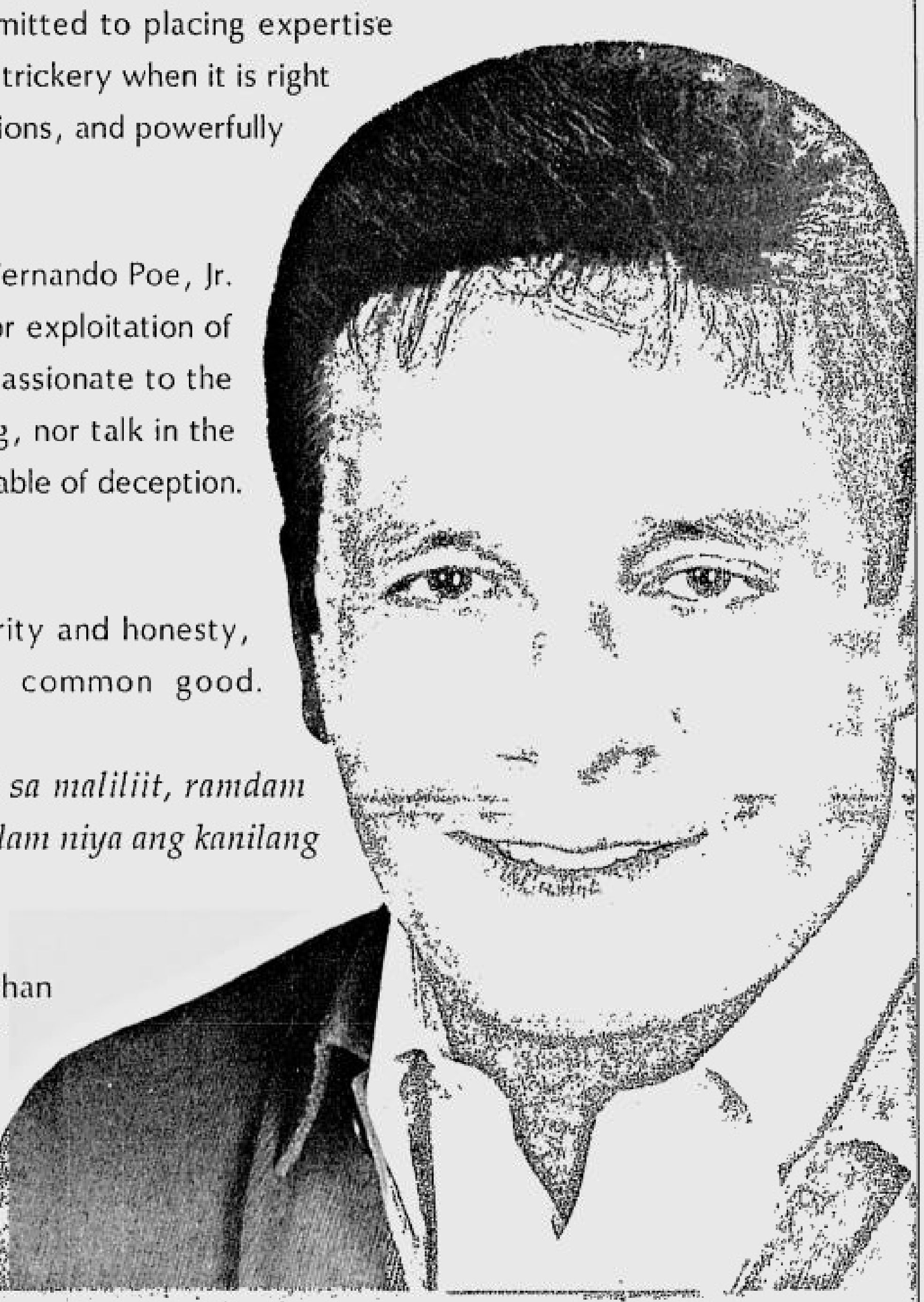
We see urgent need for a new breed of leadership, the kind committed to placing expertise at the service of all rather than a favored few, sensible enough to smell trickery when it is right under its nose, strong enough to resist being waylaid by political obligations, and powerfully able to inspire.

In more than four decades of hard-earned leadership in our industry, Fernando Poe, Jr. has kept to a path that accepts neither subservience to the powerful nor exploitation of the powerless. Modest in success and undiscouraged by failure, compassionate to the needy and the deserving, he does not spout words long and unwinding, nor talk in the technocrat language that comes easy to most. He is no liar. He is not capable of deception. He does not make promises he can not keep.

His vision: To unite the country, against all odds. His tools: Sincerity and honesty, and the selflessness to put personal interest aside for the common good.

*"Hinahamak bilang artista, sa kanyang pag-aartista siya napalapit sa maliliit, ramdam niya ang kanilang pagdurusa, dinig niya ang kanilang mga hinaing, alam niya ang kanilang mga pangarap. Tunay siyang kakaiba."*

Unpretentious integrity coupled with strength of character is rarer than gold. There is no one better prepared to revive our battered dreams of a nation whose greatness lies in neither wealth nor power, but in the compassion of its citizens for one another. FOR THIS REASON ABOVE ALL, WE PLEDGE OUR UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT TO FPJ IN HIS QUEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF OUR REPUBLIC.



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Rudy Fernandez
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# Iraq sends 9-man team to study RP democracy

**By Nelson Flores**

POST-WAR Iraq is looking to the Philippines for guidance in its bid to become a true democracy.

Excellent choice for a role model, according to Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose "Joey" Lina.

The United States-appointed Iraqi government sent nine representatives over to learn "the art of governance" from Filipinos, and Lina was "happy" to oblige.

It was "essential," he said, for the Iraqi people to acquire "higher educational exposure ... to more democratic practices such as the Philippine local governance."

Lina was at the conclusion yesterday of a two-week seminar on capability building and local governance sponsored by the DILG and United States Agency for International Development.

The seminar was part of a series of "human capacity development programs" for USAID personnel and the "potential trainers" from Iraq.

In turn, the participants are expected to help Iraqi leaders enhance their "capacities for greater public service."

Among the topics discussed during the seminar were: the Public Administration Cycle in the Philippines, the Philippine Local Government System, the Three-Fold Concept of Participatory Governance, LGU-Civil Society-Private Sector Partnership, Trends in Local Governance, Gains and Challenges of Decentralization in the Philippines, and Capacity Building: A Tool for Good Governance.

# 5 suspected kidnappers arrested

**By Christian V. Esguerra and Leila B. Salaverria**

FIVE suspected kidnappers, including the country's 12th most wanted, were presented yesterday to President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang, while an abducted money lender was recovered in Mindanao, officials said Monday.

The top kidnap suspect was Ronnie Tan, 31, who had a P500,000 price on his head.

A police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group team headed by Senior Supt. Zoilo Lachica arrested Tan in his hideout in Barangay San Roque, Sto. Tomas, Batangas, at around 11 p.m. on Friday.

Tan admitted during interrogation of involvement in the 2001 kidnapping of Grace Ong, whose family owns Liana's supermarket chain, according to Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao, CIDG chief.

Tan, the Ongs' driver at the time, allegedly tipped off his fellow members in the Mostrales kidnap-for-ransom gang on the whereabouts of the victim. He was initially reported to have been with Ong when she was abducted but was subsequently released.

Aside from Tan, authorities presented to the President the supposed core of the gang that kidnapped businesswoman Dominga Chu in Pasay City last month.

Rogelio Morfe, alias Mata, was the alleged mastermind and Danilo Druga the financier of the gang, which included Vicente Anciado and Ricky Lagado. Morfe used to be an employee of the Chu family.

Anciado reportedly admitted driving the getaway vehicle, a blue Hyundai Grace van, in the Chu abduction.

Naktf chief Angelo Reyes said Morfe's gang was behind six other kidnap-for-ransom cases involving Chinese-Filipinos.

The four men were arrested in separate operations in Caloocan City, Montalban, Rizal and Tondo, Manila over the weekend by agents of Naktf, the National Bureau of Investigation, the police and military.

In his report to NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco, lawyer Ruel Lasala of the bureau's Reaction, Arrest and Interdiction Division (RAID) said Morfe and his cohorts admitted to the kidnapping in Metro Manila of six Chinese-Filipino nationals, who all paid ransom of P2 million each.

Morfe's group was associated with the Waray-Waray group of Alejandro Aldas, which was responsible for the kidnap-slay of Coca-Cola executive Betti Chua Sy, and the group of Calvin Lagado, the RAID chief said.

Chu was abducted on Jan. 21 in Pasay and rescued two days later in Caloocan. Her family was haggling with the kidnappers to bring down the P15 million-ransom demand when the rescue took place.

In Zamboanga, the family of Rainier William Clemente, owner of a lending firm in the city, said Clemente had been freed unharmed by his unidentified kidnappers, the Agence France Presse reported.

Gunmen dropped off the 48-year-old businessman outside a police camp in the Zamboanga suburbs on Saturday, 17 days after his abduction, said his brother Bong Clemente. *With Froilan Legaspi; AFP*

# Piatco asks SC anew to review 'final' ruling

NEVER say die.

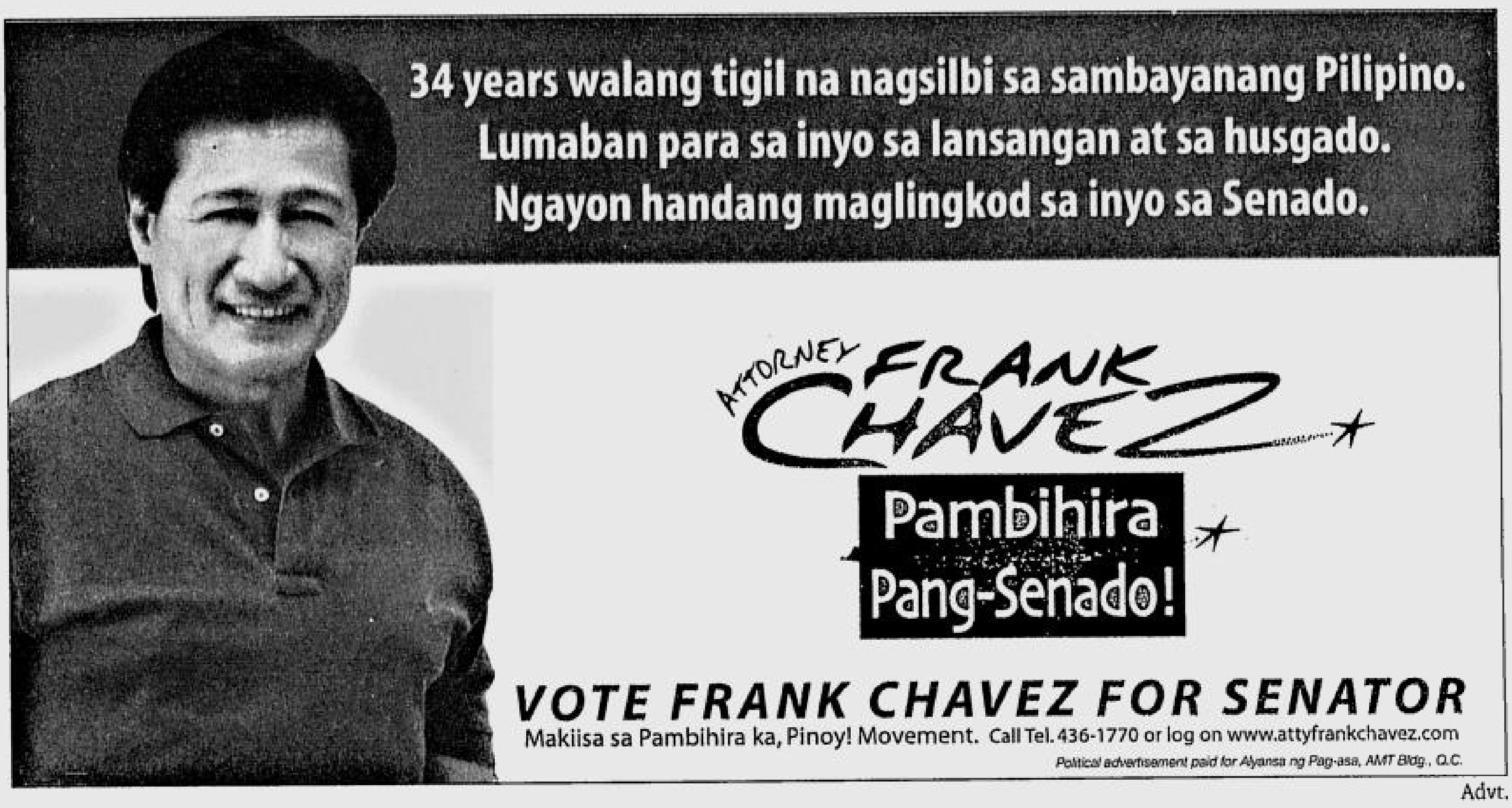
The Philippine International Air Terminal Co. Inc. (Piatco) filed on Friday a second motion for reconsideration asking the Supreme Court to set aside its "final" ruling last month that voided the consortium's contract to build the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

Piatco claims in its 88-page petition that the high court has "misappreciated" the facts in its case.

It said "Piatco was solely blamed for amendments to the Concession Agreement that it did not actually author. Piatco was accordingly considered to be ill-motivated, and castigated for making 'a mockery of the bidding process,' when in fact, it did not."

But should the high tribunal decide to stick to its original decision, Piatco asked the court to order the implementation of the contract's separability clause and to clarify that the government "cannot validly rely" on the 1987 Constitution to justify any forcible take-over of the consortium's property without due process of law.

The SC had denied "with finality" on Jan. 21 Piatco's first appeal, saying that it was "bereft of merit." *Philip C. Tubeza*



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# Anti-graft body apologizes to SC

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE HEAD of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) apologized to the Supreme Court when the tribunal questioned why the agency was investigating Ricardo Manapat's alleged fabrication of documents against presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

The PAGC was preparing documents that could be used in its "motu propio administrative investigation" against Manapat and it had issued a subpoena duces tecum to SC Clerk of Court Luzviminda Puno, wife of SC Senior Associate Justice Reynato Puno. On Feb. 3, the Court en banc ordered the PAGC to explain why the subpoena was issued against Puno.

PAGC chair Dario Rama explained in a two-page document: "The subpoena was never intended to disrespect or undermine the authority of the Honorable Court in any way. Its mere purpose, to reiterate, was to secure certain documents from the Honorable Clerk of Court that can aid the PAGC in its investigation of Manapat."

The Supreme Court is reviewing a petition to disqualify Poe from running for president because he is allegedly not a natural-born Filipino. Manapat claimed he found microfilm rolls that supported these allegations.

Petitioners Maria Jeanette C. Tecson and Felix Desiderio Jr. added that the tribunal and not the Commission on Elections (Comelec) had the proper jurisdiction over the case.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### DFA: No case vs Lhuillier

The Department of Foreign Affairs has cleared Philippe Lhuillier, the country's ambassador to Italy, of using his office in shipping used furniture bought from Italy's various flea markets.

In a letter to Lhuillier, DFA undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said "the Fact-finding mission found no prima facie evidence to establish that there was abuse of diplomatic privileges and immunities with regard to the shipment..."

The case stemmed from a letter to transmit the bill of lading and invoice that was missent to the nearby Philippine Embassy to the Vatican in Rome. The address was eventually corrected in the final bill of lading and reflected the address of the Lhuillier, which was the Philippine embassy to Italy.

Lhuillier presented all the documents that indicated the shipment contained "mobile usati" to designate used furniture, and that all import duties and corresponding taxes and fees were paid.

The shipment was also subjected to a full customs inspection and was eventually found to be not in commercial quantity and contained no banned items.

### Palace clears Cusi

MALACAÑANG has cleared Philippine Ports Authority head Alfonso Cusi of graft charges.

Cusi was accused of failing to divest ownership in the cargo-handling firm that obtained a contract to lease the PPA property in Tagbilaran, Bohol.

In a two-page decision, the Palace ordered the administrative case against Cusi dismissed, owing to the failure of complainant Virgilio Casison to substantiate the allegations.

Cusi was appointed head of the Philippine Ports Authority three years ago. Casison, who filed the case as a taxpayer before the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission last year, said Cusi's "continuing ownership" of the Starlite Marine and Industrial Services Corp. constituted conflict of interest.

The firm obtained a 15-year contract to lease and operate the PPA passenger terminal at the Port of Tagbilaran in 1998. At the time, Cusi was president and incorporator of the firm, which declared an "authorized capital stock" of P25 million.

Last Dec. 1, the PAGC threw out Casison's complaint saying there was "no prima facie case ... on the basis of the evidence on record." It said Cusi showed documents, including a deed of assignment, indicating that on March 2, 2001, he "ceded to a third person" his "entire shareholding" in Starlite. ***Armand N. Nocum***

### Ebdane: I'm in control

PHILIPPINE National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. insists he has full control of the highly politicized organization, despite reports that a good number of Philippine Military Academy graduates at the PNP are silently backing Sen. Panfilo Lacson's presidential bid.

The disgruntled PMAyers are allegedly protesting Ebdane's and President Macapagal-Arroyo's inaction on complaints about the so-called "*bata-bata* system (favoritism) within the PNP ranks.

Ebdane and his top lieutenants yesterday said police officers were "solidly" behind the leadership. "We know, because we've been going around in the field," Senior Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, told the INQUIRER. ***Christian V. Esguerra***

### Namfrel eyes students

DUE to an anticipated lack of teachers who will serve in the May 10 elections, a private poll watchdog is eyeing third and fourth year college students to serve as members of the board of elections inspectors.

Officials of the National Movement for Free Elections are discussing the feasibility of the plan with the Commission on Higher Education, which is in charge of the tertiary schools in the country.

Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion said that the chances of getting the necessary 650,000 teachers were becoming dim. He said the Namfrel would officially submit the proposal to the Commission on Elections when the talks with CHEd are completed.

Concepcion said that the Comelec was looking at other civil service employees who could serve as poll inspectors if the Department of Education could not produce enough teachers for the manual elections.

"They (students) are very idealistic. They owe nothing to the mayors or officials of their place," Concepcion said in an earlier phone interview with the INQUIRER. ***Blanche S. Rivera***

### Hizon dies in US; 89

FERNANDO M. Hizon of Pampanga and Manila died in the United States on Feb. 5, 2004. He was 89. Hizon, a 4th Degree Knights of Columbus of Maharlika Assembly, Quezon City, was born on May 30, 1914 in Apalit, Pampanga. He is survived by his wife of 59 years Aquilina; children Jose, Maria Theresa, Rose Marie and Mary Bernadette; children-in-laws Nora, Jesse, Joey and Edelito; grandchildren Jennifer, Joseph, Jeffrey, Mary Tiffany, Juno, Darryn, Christine and Bryce, and great-grandchild Leanna; and sisters Estrella, Flora and Perla. He was buried on Monday, Feb. 9, 2004, at the San Fernando Mission Cemetery after a funeral Mass held at the St. Francis Xavier Church in Burbank, California.

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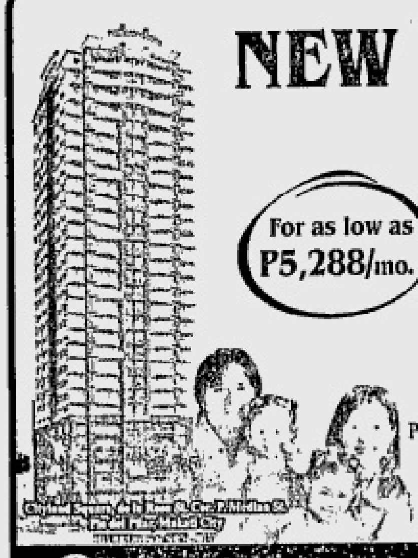

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## Private Sector

### A CALL TO POLITICAL CANDIDATES FOR STATESMANSHIP

As the election campaign period draws near, we call on all political candidates to practice the highest degree of statesmanship to keep stability in our country.

- Partisan and personality politics does not inspire our people; it only promotes divisiveness.
- Our political system over the last fifty years has not been responsive to our people who have become helpless, desperate and disillusioned by "traditional politicians".
- We support the move by many of our people and our business organizations to ask Presidential Candidates to sign a covenant witnessed by the public to show their sincerity and commitment to focus the campaign on higher issues rather than personalities.

### AN APPEAL TO MEDIA FOR SOBRIETY

We are appealing to media to observe sobriety and statesmanship through tempered and balanced reporting. This is because never in the history of the Philippines, have national elections become this crucial.

Perhaps, the publishers and editors of major newspapers can rally our people through a common editorial published weekly in their respective newspapers when the election campaign starts on February 10th and until the results have been made public.

There have been instances in the past, when media closed ranks to promote the common good. More than ever, now is the time for media to show a united front - for the sake of the country, democracy and, most importantly, for our future.

### RISING PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES

Prices of basic commodities and manufactured goods are rising because their world prices are going up. Big demand by China adds to the price pressure.

Producers and manufacturers around the world agreed to reduce production to cut losses they have been incurring in the past years. Industrial raw materials used for production have significantly increased like steel, aluminum, copper, fertilizer, cement, coal; so have wheat, soy meal, corn, milk, beef, chicken, and petroleum products.

In a global environment, where there are fewer players as a result of mergers and acquisitions, it is much easier for manufacturers and producers who have manufacturing plants in major markets, to reach a decision.

### PROACTIVE MEASURES

To protect Filipino consumers, the National Price Coordinating Council has adopted proactive measures to temper the price increases. Now that Congress has adjourned, the President can lower or reduce tariffs on essential raw materials to lower the cost of inputs in producing food.

#### Prices of chicken, pork, and beef to go down next month

The President will sign an Executive Order allowing the one time duty-free importation of 350,000 metric tons of corn and soy meal to lower the prices of chicken, pork, and beef.

Manufacturers and producers should consider making temporary sacrifices for the sake of the consumer by absorbing their higher cost inasmuch as the duty free importations on their raw material inputs will be forthcoming next month.

#### Cement prices to be stable during the summer season

Former DTI Secretary MAR Roxas reduced the safeguard duty on cement by P5.00. DTI Secretary Cesar Purisima is, also, considering lowering the duty by another P5.00, if prices do not stabilize.

Union Cement published their retail prices of cement in Metro Manila at P125 per bag; Bulacan and Pampanga at P130 per bag. We urge the other cement companies to likewise publish their prices in the provinces where their cement are available.

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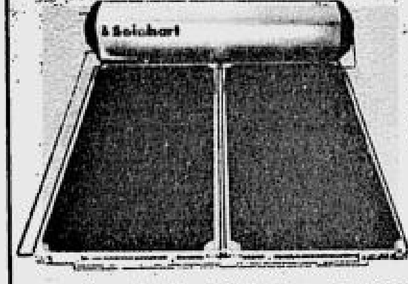

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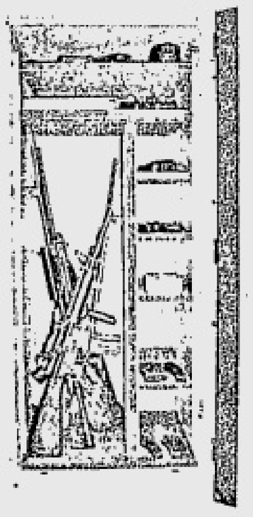

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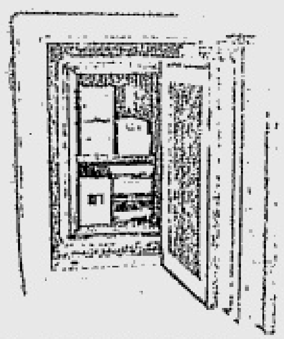

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# The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

# Bush shifts rationale for war on Iraq

**By Steve Holland**

**WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Sunday offered a shifting rationale for the Iraq war—that Saddam Hussein had the capacity to develop unconventional arms if not the actual weapons.**

Iraq's weapons of mass destruction was the main reason cited by Bush for the war, in which more than 500 US troops and thousands of Iraqis have died, though no such arms were found and weapons hunters say pre-war intelligence was flawed.

Bush addressed the criticism on Iraq and his handling of the US economy in an appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press" as his job approval ratings continue to slide and some polls show Democratic presidential contender John Kerry could beat him in the November election.

The president defended putting off the results of a bipartisan investigation of Iraq intelligence until March 31, 2005, well after the election, and he stopped short of saying he would testify before it, saying only he would be glad to "visit with them," share knowledge and make recommendations.

Bush conceded that it was "correct" that weapons of mass destruction had not been found in Iraq but emphasized a different reason why the war was necessary.

"He had the capacity to have a weapon, make a weapon. We thought he had weapons. The international community thought he had weapons. But he had the capacity to make a weapon and then let that weapon fall into the hands of a shadowy terrorist network," Bush said.

The failure to find the promised weapons is turning into a credibility problem for the president. A Time/CNN poll released on Sunday said 55 percent of Americans have "doubts and reservations" about Bush and less than half, 44 percent, said he is a leader they can trust.

Bush decided on his own to make a rare appearance on the top-rated Sunday talk show in an attempt to regain the high ground of the election-year Iraq debate, aides said.

They concede Bush is going through a tough period and believe his tumbling poll numbers are in part a result of a chorus of attacks by Democratic challengers and the interview is part of an aggressive push to answer the critics.

With more than 500 Americans killed during the war and its chaotic aftermath, Bush said he did not believe they died in vain. "Saddam Hussein was dangerous," he said.

Bush and his team had said in the run-up to the war that it was necessary to topple Saddam because he had stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, was trying to build a nuclear weapon and represented a grave danger in the post-Sept. 11, 2001, world.

Democratic front-runner Kerry wasted no time in criticizing Bush for offering a new war rationale.

With no weapons found in Iraq, the administration had previously justified the war by arguing Saddam was worth toppling because of his appalling human rights record.

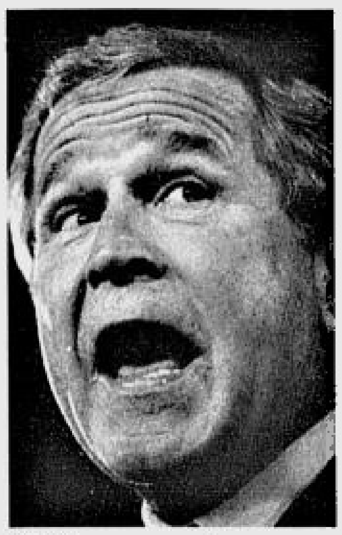
In the interview, Bush was read a quote by Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz who said this was not a justification for attacking Iraq. He declined to address it.

"Now the president is giving us a new reason for sending people to war, and the problem is not just that he is changing his story now, it is that it appears he was telling the American people stories in 2002," Kerry said in Richmond, Virginia.

He called on Bush to allow a "legitimate and immediate investigation into the extraordinary failure" of US intelligence or whether the Bush administration hyped the threat for political purposes.

Last Friday Bush appointed a bipartisan commission to investigate flaws in intelligence used to justify the war based on former chief weapons hunter David Kay's fruitless search.

Bush said he gave the commission until March 2005 to report back because he did not want its work to be hurried and that voters will have ample time to assess "whether or not I made the right decision" in invading Iraq.


BUSH

"It's important that this investigation take its time," he said.

Bush said CIA Director George Tenet's job was not in jeopardy but he blamed the intelligence he received for his pre-war convictions that Iraq was a danger.

"I expected to find the weapons... I based my decision on the best intelligence possible, intelligence that had been gathered over the years, intelligence that not only our analysts thought was valid but analysts from other countries thought were valid," he said.

On "Fox News Sunday," Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina said the commission should fully investigate but he hoped it could finish before the election. *Reuters*

## *What Bush previously said*

WASHINGTON—Here are some of President George W. Bush's comments on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

2002: *Bush outlines 'Iraqi threat,'* Oct. 7: "The Iraqi regime ... possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons. It is seeking nuclear weapons."

2003: *Bush makes the case against Iraq*, March 17: "Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised."

*Bush television interview about weapons*, April 24: The United States is learning in interrogations and interviews with Iraqi scientists that "perhaps he (Saddam) destroyed some, perhaps he dispersed some" and that "it's going to take time to find them."

*After talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin*, June 2: "We've discovered a weapons system—biological labs that Iraq denied she had and labs that were prohibited under the UN resolutions."

*Bush in a televised speech to the nation*, Sept. 7: "We acted in Iraq, where the former regime sponsored terror, possessed and used weapons of mass destruction, and for 12 years defied the clear demands of the United Nations Security Council..."

2004: *Bush's State of the Union Address*, Jan. 20: "Had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day."

*During talks with Polish President Kwasniewski*, Jan 27: "First of all I think it's very important for us to let the Iraq Survey Group do its work so we can find out the facts, compare the facts to what was thought."

"There is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein was a grave and gathering threat to America and the world. And I say that based upon intelligence that I saw prior to the decision to go into Iraq, and I say that based upon what I know today. And the world is better off without him."

*Prior to Bush meeting with his Cabinet*, Feb. 2: "What we don't know yet is what we thought, and what the Iraqi Survey Group has found, and we want to look at that."

*Bush interview with NBC*, Feb. 8: "I think, if I might remind you that in my language I called it a grave and gathering threat, but I don't want to get into word contests. But what I do want to share with you is my sentiment at the time. There was no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein was a danger to America," Bush said.

"Well, because he had the capacity to have a weapon, make a weapon. We thought he had weapons. The international community thought he had weapons. But he had the capacity to make a weapon and then let that weapon fall into the hands of a shadowy terrorist network," Bush added. *Reuters*

# Kerry captures Maine, takes aim at Bush

WASHINGTON—Bolstered by yet another strong showing in a contest for delegates, US Democratic front-runner John Kerry took aim at President George W. Bush as he entered a crucial phase Monday in his effort to claim his party's presidential nomination.

Kerry held a commanding lead in the northeastern state of Maine after Sunday's Democratic caucus, where 24 delegates were at stake. With 50 percent of the ballot in, the US senator from neighboring Massachusetts led the remaining five candidates with 45 percent of the vote, according to partial returns made public by party officials.

Former Vermont governor Howard Dean was a distant second with 26 percent, ahead of antiwar Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, who placed third with 15 percent of the ballot.

North Carolina Sen. John Edwards was running fourth with nine percent, while former Nato commander Wesley Clark was a disappointing fifth with just four percent of the vote, the data showed.

Maine will mark Kerry's 10th win out of 12 Democratic primaries and caucuses held thus far. Edwards and Clark have each won one, keeping their hopes alive as the campaign moves to the southern states of Virginia and Tennessee.

Between 12,000 and 15,000 party faithful were estimated to have taken part in party meetings in schools, libraries and private homes in about 404 Maine towns, where convention delegates were elected.

The outcome was another painful blow to Dean who, like Kerry, claims the Northeast as his stronghold.

Dean crisscrossed the state Sunday in an 11th-hour attempt to sway some of the voters, but was apparently unable to stop his chief rival whose campaign was gathering steam.

Dean, who dominated opinion polls for much of last year, has so far failed to win a single caucus or primary and made his further participation in the race conditional on victory Feb. 17 in Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, Kucinich, who regularly places at the bottom of the Democratic roster, was obviously rewarded for continuing to campaign in the state up to the last minute.

Looking more confident with every passing day, Kerry stayed away from Maine, concentrating on much larger prizes Virginia and Tennessee, which hold primaries Tuesday.

Virginia sends 82 delegates to the convention while Tennessee has 69 delegates in play. *AFP*

# Turkey woman buried for 1 week rescued from rubble

ANKARA—A 24-year-old woman buried for nearly a week was pulled alive Monday from the rubble of a collapsed Turkish housing block in which at least 84 others died, television reported.

Yasemin Yaprakci was found in the basement of the building with her foot trapped under a heavy slab of concrete. Rescuers took three hours to free her, Anatolia news agency reported.

She was fitted with a neck collar and a serum drip and carried to a nearby ambulance amid applause from her rescuers, live television footage showed.

She was reported to be exhausted, but conscious, Anatolia said.

Rescue teams located her after she kept calling for water under the rubble, it added.

The agency said rescuers had told Yaprakci her one-and-a-half-year-old daughter was alive and let her talk to her husband over a walkie-talkie.

Yaprakci was the second "miracle" survivor to be pulled from the wreckage of the 11-floor building in the central Turkish city of Konya which collapsed last Monday evening, as many residents would have been celebrating a Muslim festival.

She was at home with her husband and daughter receiving relatives when the building went down, according to newspaper reports.

Her husband grabbed their daughter and ran downstairs. He managed to throw the baby girl into the garden and jump out just as the apartment block collapsed, trapping Yasemin and several other relatives, the reports said.

Another survivor, a 16-year-old boy, was pulled out of the debris on Sunday morning after surviving in an air pocket in the basement. *AFP*

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**A VIETNAMESE** health worker burns chickens in the district of Long Bien in Hanoi on Feb. 9. REUTERS

# Bird flu nearly over in Thailand as 2 more Vietnamese catch virus

HANOI—Two more people in Vietnam were diagnosed with bird flu, as Thailand said Monday it hoped to become the first hard-hit Asian nation to rid itself of the disease that has killed 19 people in the region.

Confirmation of the new infections in Vietnam followed the imposition of bans on poultry imports from the United States by a number of Asian nations after bird flu was detected on a farm in the state of Delaware.

Health officials in Ho Chi Minh City said a 19-year-old man who was hospitalized on Thursday had tested positive for the H5N1 strain of avian influenza.

Doctors said he was in critical condition, but a 30-year-old man from Lam Dong province, who also tested positive for the disease, was said to be in stable condition.

In human terms, Vietnam is the worst hit of the 10 Asian nations and the United States currently tackling outbreaks of bird flu. Thailand, where five people had died, is the only other country with confirmed human infections.

In total 19 Vietnamese have been infected with the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus, 13 of whom have died. Two others have made a complete recovery but four remain hospitalized in the communist nation.

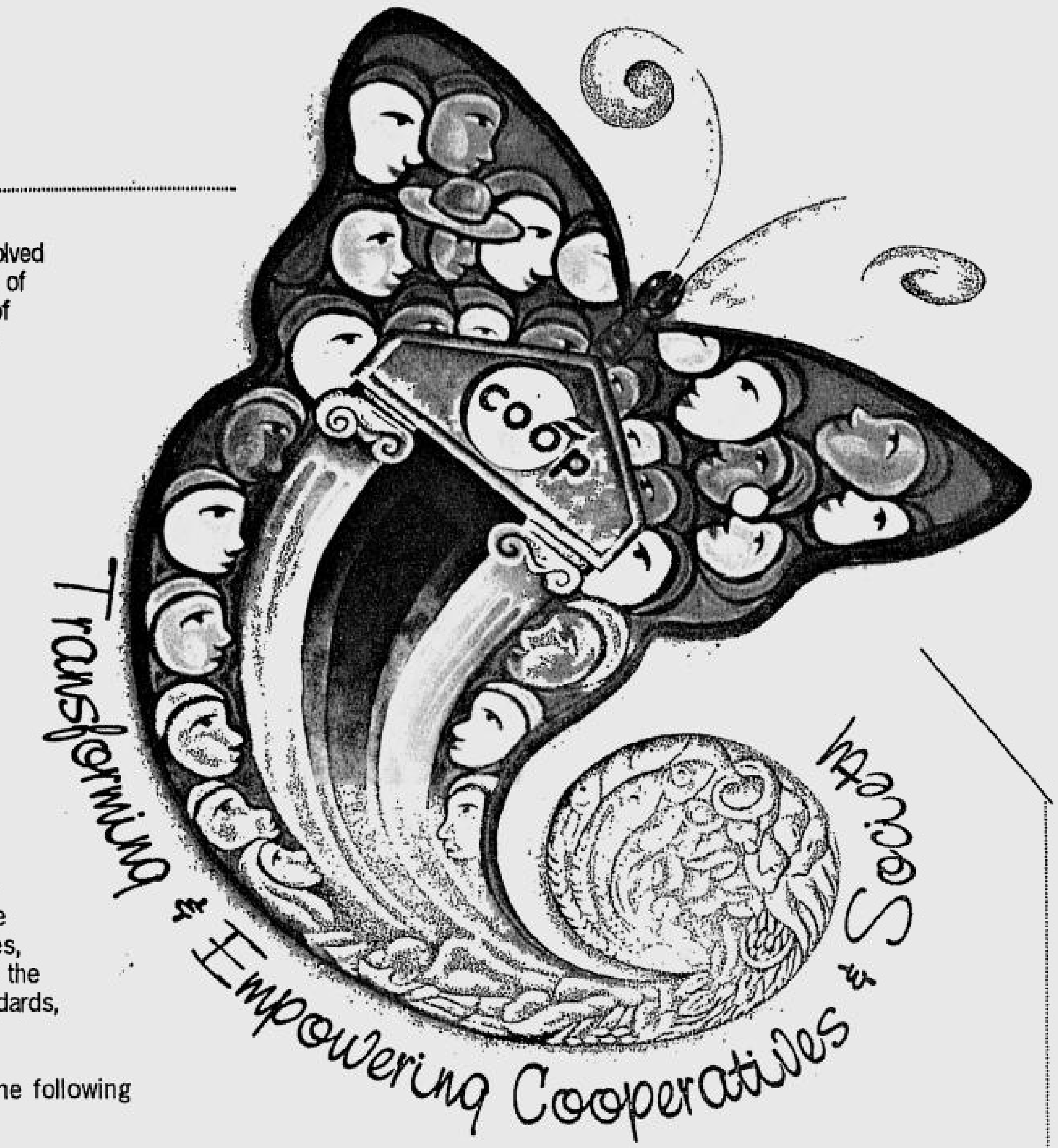
The World Health Organization has warned that H5N1 could kill millions across the globe if it combined with a human influenza virus to create a new, highly contagious strain transmissible among humans.

"We are in a situation where people have become infected with H5N1 but we haven't crossed the threshold into this new threat level," said Bob Dietz, the WHO's spokesperson in Vietnam.

Meanwhile, Thai Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said Monday that Japan, the largest market for its $1.2-billion poultry export business, would send a team of experts to the kingdom this week to test its chickens.

The country has eradicated all but one of its 163 outbreaks of the H5N1 virus, which had been reported in more than half of its 76 provinces including Bangkok, where the remaining outbreak is located.

But as Thailand appeared to be bringing bird flu under control, it continued to spread in China, the world's second-largest producer and fifth-largest exporter of chicken meat. *AFP*



# HELP SOLVE THE HOUSING PROBLEM, SUPPORT HOUSING COOPERATIVES!

We are leaders and managers of cooperatives actively involved in housing in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. Some of the co-ops that we represent are pioneers in the field of housing cooperatives in the Philippines, having been established as early as 1971. Although we are in different stages of implementing housing projects for the benefit of our members, we speak with one voice in calling for the recognition of and support for housing cooperatives as a viable alternative solution to the housing problem of our country.

We have conducted several fora to identify the issues and concerns that need to be resolved to create a policy environment that is conducive to housing co-ops, the result of which is contained in the recommendations we are now presenting.

At present, no Philippine law recognizes housing cooperatives, although some existing laws on ownership and socialized housing may be applied by implication. Article 23 of the Cooperative Code (Republic Act 6938) merely mentions housing as one of the activities that a service cooperative may engage in. Besides the absence of a legal framework, housing cooperatives are mired by slow, tedious and allegedly graft-ridden bureaucratic processes. There are also unreasonable requirements that should not be applied to housing cooperatives, in view of their unique nature. The most important of these are the license to sell requirement, the application of certain building standards, and improper zoning classifications.

We call for the immediate action by the government on the following recommendations:

## 1. FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

**For Congress to pass amendments to the Cooperative Code and/or a Special Law that would:**

a) Amend the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 (Republic Act Number 7279) such that the housing cooperative model is recognized and supported, and it is identified and incorporated as a variation of the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), specifically, as an alternative to the unitization of the mother title;

b) Amend RA 7279 such that fiscal incentives are given to builders/contractors and proponents of housing cooperatives;

c) Amend the Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Finance Act (Republic Act Number 7838) to include government funding for housing cooperatives, as with the case of other recognized government housing programs outlined in RA 7279; and

d) Amend the Subdivision and Condominium Buyers Protective Decree (Presidential Decree Number 957) and Batas Pambansa Bilang 220, which provide the basis for the relaxation of standards and technical requirements for economic and socialized housing projects, such that housing cooperatives are exempted from securing a License To Sell and a Verification of Survey Results (VSR) [VSR exemption for vertical housing].

## II. FOR EXECUTIVE ACTION BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

a) For the PAG-IBIG, LBP, SSS, GSIS and other government financial institutions (GFIs) to create a loan window for housing cooperatives with rules and requirements that are appropriate to housing co-ops and that allow institutional loans to co-ops for collectively-owned housing.

b) For the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) Board of Directors to issue a resolution exempting housing cooperatives from the License to Sell requirement.

c) For the HUDCC or the HLURB to revise the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 7279 such that support given to housing cooperatives is recognized as a mode of compliance for socialized housing development, wherein developers of projects other than economic or socialized housing shall devote 20% of their land area of project cost to socialized housing.

d) For the HLURB, HUDCC, The Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to prepare and make public regular compliance reports with respect to the implementation of Executive Order Number 45.

e) For the HUDCC, HLURB, DA, DAR, DENR and other concerned government agencies to clarify and make public, in relation to EO 45, the process flow (steps/activities, units/persons in charge, timeframe), requirements, and fees for securing housing-related permits, licenses and clearances, including maximum fees for private preparers of EGGARS and other requirements; and

f) For the HLURB to review PD 957 ... to exempt housing cooperatives from certain inappropriate requirements for structures such as elevators, parking spaces, and density requirements, subject to the approval of the co-op, members and other conditions"

## III. FOR EXECUTIVE ACTION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

a) For local governments to consider the inclusion in their comprehensive land use plans of a classification of land according to geological hazard, so that EGGARS would be required only for pre-identified geologically hazardous areas.

b) For city/municipal councils to prioritize action on applications by cooperatives for exemption from zoning classifications to allow housing co-ops to be put up near the areas of work of the co-ops' members.

As we call on government to act promptly on these recommendations, we pledge that we will initiate and support actions to advocate for these policy recommendations of the NATCCO Network and other co-ops, and that we will help ensure their effective and speedy implementation upon approval.

Finalized by housing cooperative leaders after discussions in various housing co-op forums, including those held in Baguio City and Dumaguete City in the year 2003.

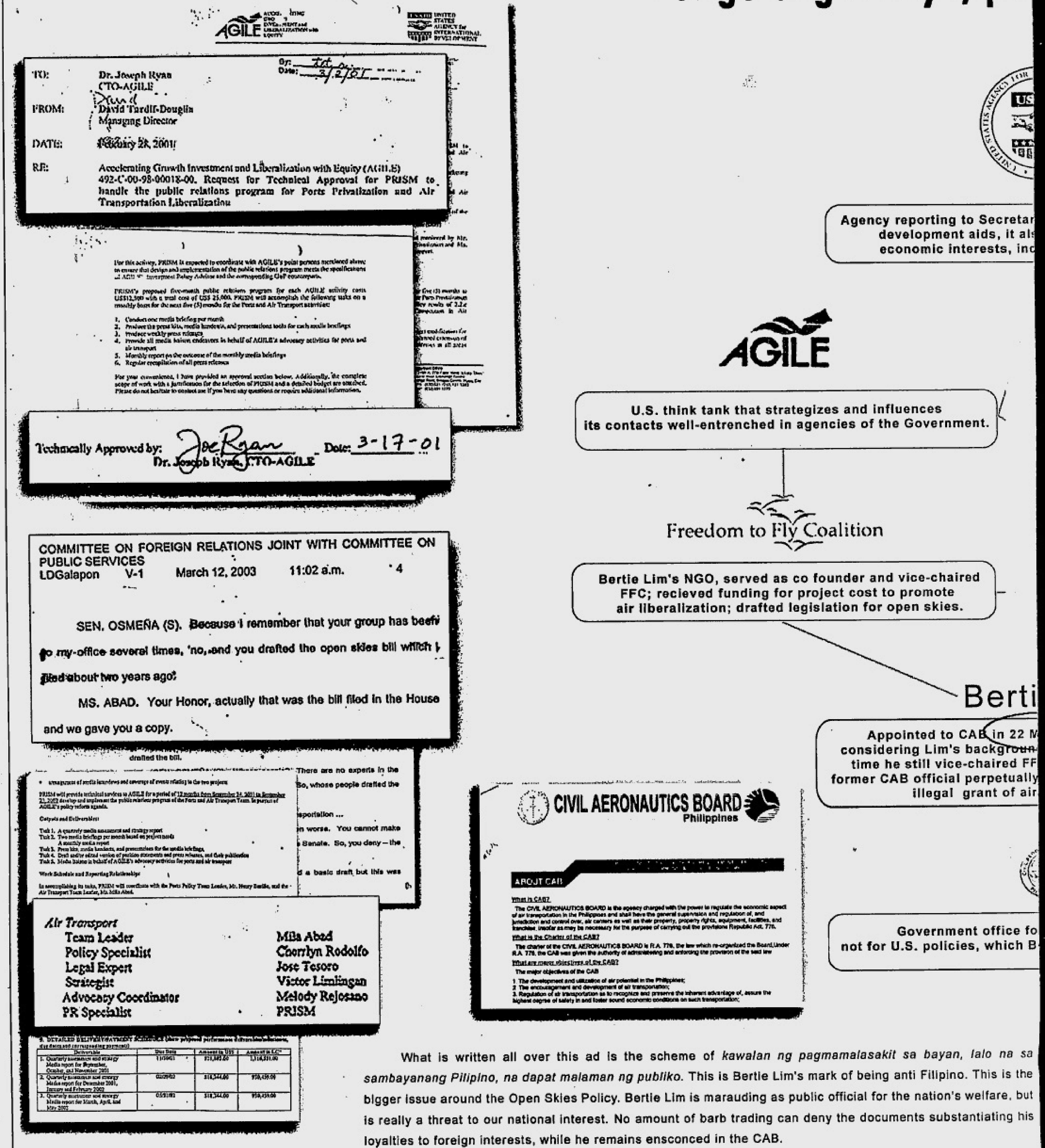
***Signed:***

Bobby Salera, *General Manager*, **Cebu People's Multi-Purpose Cooperative**; Vicente Castro, *Manager*, **Riverside Medical Center MPC**, Bacolod City; Herbert Abadia, *Staff*, Ponciano Arias, Jr., *BOD*, **Fairchild Employees Credit Coop**, MEPZ, Cebu; Ma. Teresita Rallos, *BOD*, Vilma Llanes, *General Manager*, **Holy Child MPC**, Bato, Leyte; Lorna Montano, *Manager*, Rene Casacao, *BOD*, **Urban Poor Development Coop**, Iloilo City; Reynulfo Asis, *BOD*, **Basud Multi-Purpose Cooperative**, Camarines Norte; Hermes Vergara, *Manager*, **Oro Housing Service Coop** (Cagayan de Oro); Jovito Torrero, *Housing Project Officer*, **San Francisco Government Employees MPC**, Agusan Del Sur; Renia Salinas, *Co-CEO*, **NATCCO-Visayas (VICTO)**; Zimel Magallano, *Project Officer*, **Perpetual Help Credit Coop**, Dumaguete City; Saturnino Baltazar, *Board Secretary*, Ma. Asuncion Minglana, *General Manager*, Heidi Bombon, *Mgt. Trainee*, **SLU-SVP Housing Coop**, Baguio City; Judith Salcedo, *Manager*, **SCEGA MPC**, Mandaue City; Rita Manansala, *Housing Project Officer*, **CEMVEDCO**, Carbon Market, Cebu City; Elvira Ursal, *Office of Cong. Tulagan*, House of Representatives, Quezon City; Roberto Matalog, *General Manager*, **Tuy Market Vendors MPC**, Tuy, Batangas; Ma. Teresa Ragay, *BOD*, Emma Burlasa, *HR Officer*, **Dumaguete Cathedral Credit Coop**, Dumaguete City; Danny B.Consuegra, *Housing Project Officer* **(SEDCOP Project) NATCCO**; Sylvia P. Lagunoy, *Technical Assistant for Housing*, **NATCCO**; Elyn O. Fernandez *Housing Project Officer* **(CHF Project) NATCCO**; Sixdon Macasaet, *Manager*, **COPRIDD NATCCO**; Rosalina J. Badayos, *President*, **Coop-NATCCO Party;** Luis Carrillo, *National Coordinator*, **Coop-NATCCO Party;** Cresente C. Paez, Representative-Nominee, **Coop-NATCCO Party**

ADVT.

# Ang diagram at mga bataya

## Pangulong Arroyo, pin



Accelerating Growth Investment and Liberalization with Equity

UNITED STATES AGENCY for INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By: 
Date: 3/2/01

TO: Dr. Joseph Ryan
CTO-AGILE

FROM: David Tardif-Douglin
Managing Director

DATE: February 28, 2001

RE: Accelerating Growth Investment and Liberalization with Equity (AGILE) 492-C-00-98-00018-00. Request for Technical Approval for PRISM to handle the public relations program for Ports Privatization and Air Transportation Liberalization

For this activity, PRISM is expected to coordinate with AGILE's point persons mentioned above to ensure that design and implementation of the public relations program meets the specifications of AGILE [illegible] Investment Policy Advisor and the corresponding GoP counterparts.

PRISM's proposed five-month public relations program for each AGILE activity costs US$12,500 with a total cost of US$ 25,000. PRISM will accomplish the following tasks on a monthly basis for the next five (5) months for the Ports and Air Transport activities:

1. Conduct one media briefing per month
2. Produce the press kits, media handouts, and presentations tools for each media briefings
3. Produce weekly press releases
4. Provide all media liaison endeavors in behalf of AGILE's advocacy activities for ports and air transport
5. Monthly report on the outcome of the monthly media briefings
6. Regular compilation of all press releases

For your convenience, I have provided an approval section below. Additionally, the complete scope of work with a justification for the selection of PRISM and a detailed budget are attached. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Technically Approved by: Joe Ryan
Dr. Joseph Ryan, CTO-AGILE
Date: 3-17-01

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS JOINT WITH COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES
LDGalapon V-1 March 12, 2003 11:02 a.m. 4

SEN. OSMEÑA (S). Because I remember that your group has been to my office several times, 'no, and you drafted the open skies bill which filed about two years ago?

MS. ABAD. Your Honor, actually that was the bill filed in the House and we gave you a copy.

drafted the bill.

There are no experts in the

So, whose people drafted the

sportation ...

n worse. You cannot make

Senate. So, you deny – the

d a basic draft but this was

- arrangement of media interviews and coverage of events relating to the two projects

PRISM will provide technical services to AGILE for a period of 12 months from September 24, 2001 to September 23, 2002 develop and implement the public relations program of the Ports and Air Transport Team. In pursuit of AGILE's policy reform agenda.

Outputs and Deliverables

Task 1. A quarterly media assessment and strategy report
Task 2. Two media briefings per month based on project needs
A monthly media report
Task 3. Press kits, media handouts, and presentations for the media briefings
Task 4. Draft and/or edited version of position statements and press releases, and their publication
Task 5. Media liaison in behalf of AGILE's advocacy activities for ports and air transport

Work Schedule and Reporting Relationships

In accomplishing its tasks, PRISM will coordinate with the Ports Policy Team Leader, Mr. Henry Basilio, and the Air Transport Team Leader, Ms. Mila Abad.

*Air Transport*

| | |
|---|---|
| Team Leader | Mila Abad |
| Policy Specialist | Coorilyn Rodolfo |
| Legal Expert | Jose Tesoro |
| Strategist | Victor Limlingan |
| Advocacy Coordinator | Melody Rejosano |
| PR Specialist | PRISM |

4. DETAILED DELIVERY/PAYMENT SCHEDULE (show proposed performance deliverables/milestones, due dates and corresponding payments)

| Deliverable | Due Date | Amount in US$ | Amount in LC* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Quarterly assessment and strategy Media report for September, October, and November 2001 | 11/30/01 | [illegible] | [illegible] |
| 2. Quarterly assessment and strategy Media report for December 2001, January and February 2002 | 02/28/02 | $18,344.00 | [illegible] |
| 3. Quarterly assessment and strategy Media report for March, April, and May 2002 | 05/31/02 | $18,344.00 | [illegible] |

Agency reporting to Secretar
development aids, it als
economic interests, inc

AGILE

U.S. think tank that strategizes and influences its contacts well-entrenched in agencies of the Government.

Freedom to Fly Coalition

Bertie Lim's NGO, served as co founder and vice-chaired FFC; recieved funding for project cost to promote air liberalization; drafted legislation for open skies.

Berti

Appointed to CAB in 22 M
considering Lim's backgroun
time he still vice-chaired FF
former CAB official perpetually
illegal grant of air

CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
Philippines

ABOUT CAB

What is CAB?

The CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD is the agency charged with the power to regulate the economic aspect of air transportation in the Philippines and shall have the general supervision and regulation of, and jurisdiction and control over, air carriers as well as their property, property rights, equipment, facilities, and franchises, insofar as may be necessary for the purpose of carrying out the provisions Republic Act. 776.

What is the Charter of the CAB?

The charter of the CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD is R.A. 776, the law which re-organized the Board.Under R.A. 776, the CAB was given the authority of administering and enforcing the provision of the said law

What are major objectives of the CAB?

The major objectives of the CAB

1. The development and utilization of air potential in the Philippines;
2. The encouragement and development of air transportation;
3. Regulation of air transportation as to recognize and preserve the inherent advantage of, assure the highest degree of safety in and foster sound economic conditions on such transportation;

Government office fo
not for U.S. policies, which B

What is written all over this ad is the scheme of *kawalan ng pagmamalasakit sa bayan, lalo na sa sambayanang Pilipino, na dapat malaman ng publiko*. This is Bertie Lim's mark of being anti Filipino. This is the bigger issue around the Open Skies Policy. Bertie Lim is marauding as public official for the nation's welfare, but is really a threat to our national interest. No amount of barb trading can deny the documents substantiating his loyalties to foreign interests, while he remains ensconced in the CAB.

The clear and present danger confronting us is having US-paid and preferred hack in Bertie Lim holding the CAB'hostage and victimizing the taxpayers (his payroll is from the Filipino people). Bertie Lim's stay in the CAB is a pampering that not even the archives' appointee Manapat enjoyed. Yet Malacañang is yet to budge. Bertie Lim appears to be larger than the issues at stake, such as our air domain rights, national interest and patrimony.

***Ang paninindigan ay dapat nakakiling sa k***
***mangibabaw ang iskema ng pagtatak***

**ALAB KATIPUNAN**
**(AK)**
ILDEFONSO SILVA
Chairman
CARLITO RALLISTAN
Vice-Chairman
GINA DELA CRUZ
Secretary General
LEJUN DELA CRUZ
Deputy Sec. Gen. (Luzon)
SAMSON VELARDE
Deputy Sec. Gen. (Visayas)
JOSE DIOLOLA
Deptuy Sec. Gen (Mindanao)
ARNOLD PARDO
Treasurer
VIRGIE VILLANUEVA
Auditor

Chapters & Affiliate Organizations
AK- NORTHERN LUZON
AK-NUEVA-ECIJA
AK-NEGROS
AK-PANAY
AK-BOHOL
AK-DAVAO
AK-AGUSAN
AK-CAVITE
AK-NCR
People's Organization & National Sectoral Organizations
National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU)
Ugnayan ng Maralita Laban sa Kahirapan (UMALAB-KA)
Sandigan ng Nagkakaisang Kabataan (SIKLAB)

Alliance of Democratic Labor Organizations (ADLO)
Democratic Alliance of Labor Organizations (DALO)
Ilocos Sur Federation of Farmers & Fisherfolks (ISFFF)
Mindanao Inter-tribal Alliance League-Interim Council (MITALIC)

EDGARDO OREDINA
**Philippine Airlines Employees Association (PALEA)**

**KONGRESO NG PAGKAKAISA NG MANGGAGAWANG PILIPINO (KPMP)**
TONY POLICARPIO
President
ALEX BARRIENTOS
Treasurer
CARLITO RALLISTAN
Auditor

**SIGLO**
Solidarity of Independent & General Labor Organizations

ATTY. ERNESTO ARELLANO
National President
ROMMEL ZAMBRANO
General Secretary

Affiliates:
Phil. Carpet Employees Association
Phil. Woolen Spinning Mills Employees Union
United Workers of Sanoh Fulton Phils.

Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Tri-Phil Interr
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Senga Phils. Employees Union-Indepe
Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Mangaga
Malayan Textile Mills Inc.
Mayers Monthly Employees Unio
Solvic Independent Labor Union
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Samahan ng Manggagawa ng Hilto
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Shrimpack
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Toronto P
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Infinity M
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Top Vis
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa ZCL Envi
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Knittex
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa JBL Fu
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Fortun
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Bottle Cap o
Kapatiran ng Manggagawa sa Treas
Kawasaki United Labor Union
Alderly Builders Workers Union

# n ng kataksilan ni Bertie Lim

## apayagan n'yo ba ito?

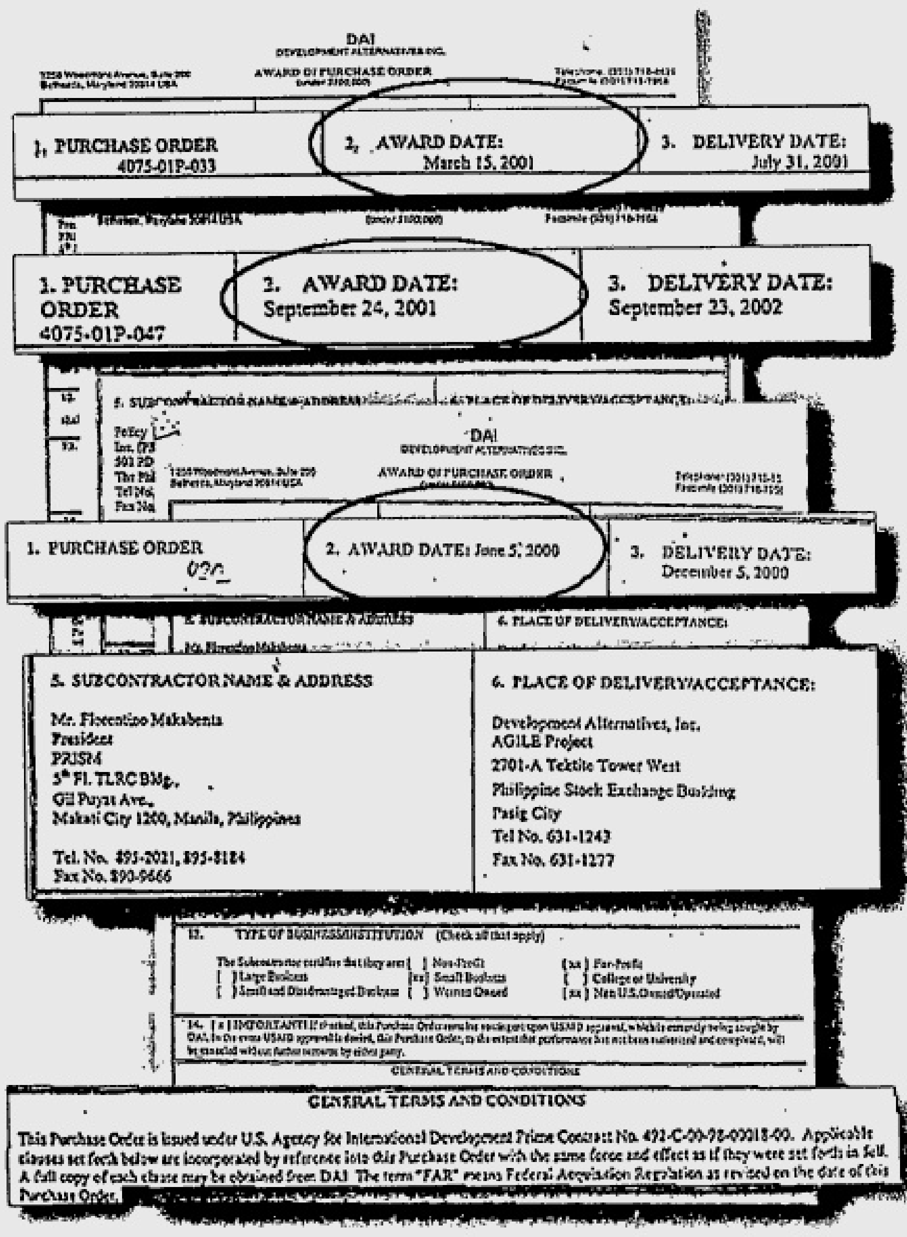
y of State; aside from funding
so funds lobbies for U.S.
luding air liberalization.

DAI
Development *Alternatives*, Inc.

One of the 3 major consulting firms of AGILE;
Conduit of its projects that employs
both American and Filipino nationals.

PRISM

A local public relations firm subcontracted by AGILE/DAI
for its pro port and air liberalization,
which then worked with FFC.



DAI
DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES INC.
AWARD OF PURCHASE ORDER

| 1. PURCHASE ORDER | 2. AWARD DATE: | 3. DELIVERY DATE: |
|---|---|---|
| 4075-01P-033 | March 15, 2001 | July 31, 2001 |

| 1. PURCHASE ORDER | 2. AWARD DATE: | 3. DELIVERY DATE: |
|---|---|---|
| 4075-01P-047 | September 24, 2001 | September 23, 2002 |

DAI
DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES INC.
AWARD OF PURCHASE ORDER

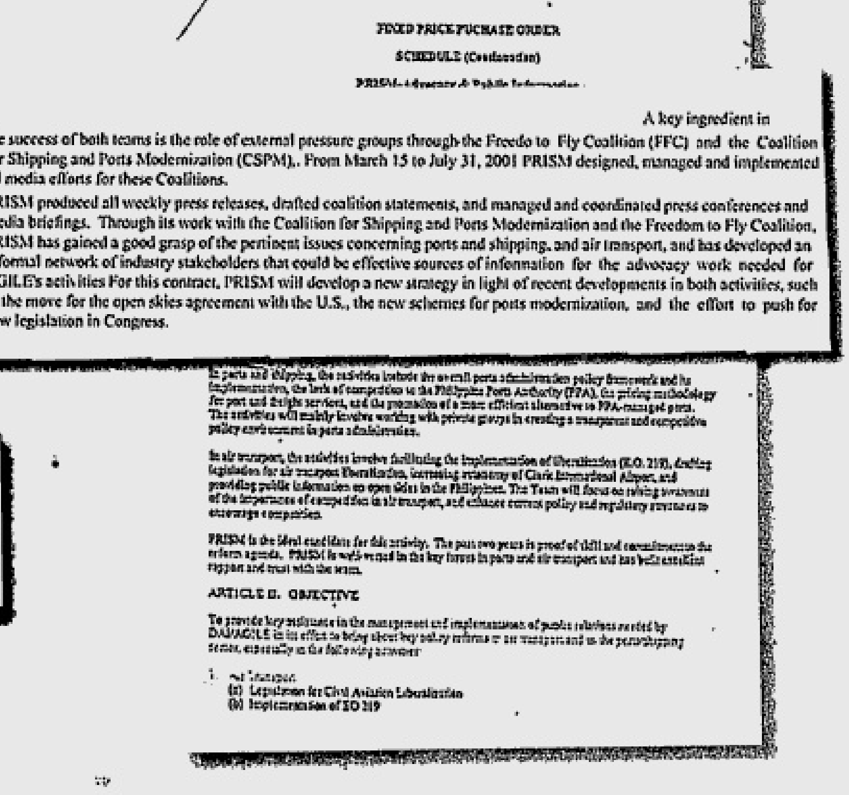
| 1. PURCHASE ORDER | 2. AWARD DATE: June 5, 2000 | 3. DELIVERY DATE: |
|---|---|---|
| 020 | | December 5, 2000 |

| 5. SUBCONTRACTOR NAME & ADDRESS | 6. PLACE OF DELIVERY/ACCEPTANCE: |
|---|---|
| Mr. Florentino Makabenta<br>President<br>PRISM<br>5th Fl. TLRC Bldg.,<br>Gil Puyat Ave.,<br>Makati City 1200, Manila, Philippines<br>Tel. No. 895-2021, 895-8184<br>Fax No. 890-9666 | Development Alternatives, Inc.<br>AGILE Project<br>2701-A Tektite Tower West<br>Philippine Stock Exchange Building<br>Pasig City<br>Tel No. 631-1243<br>Fax No. 631-1277 |

13. TYPE OF BUSINESS/INSTITUTION (Check all that apply)

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This Purchase Order is issued under U.S. Agency for International Development Prime Contract No. 492-C-00-98-00018-00. Applicable clauses set forth below are incorporated by reference into this Purchase Order with the same force and effect as if they were set forth in full. A full copy of each clause may be obtained from DAI. The term "FAR" means Federal Acquisition Regulation as revised on the date of this Purchase Order.



FIXED PRICE PURCHASE ORDER

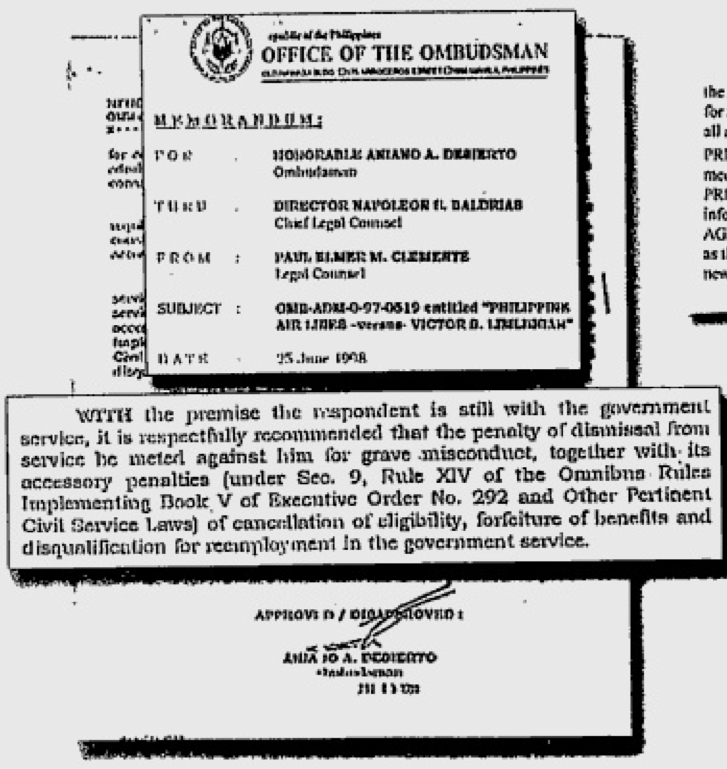
SCHEDULE (Continuation)

A key ingredient in the success of both teams is the role of external pressure groups through the Freedom to Fly Coalition (FFC) and the Coalition for Shipping and Ports Modernization (CSPM). From March 15 to July 31, 2001 PRISM designed, managed and implemented all media efforts for these Coalitions.

PRISM produced all weekly press releases, drafted coalition statements, and managed and coordinated press conferences and media briefings. Through its work with the Coalition for Shipping and Ports Modernization and the Freedom to Fly Coalition, PRISM has gained a good grasp of the pertinent issues concerning ports and shipping, and air transport, and has developed an informal network of industry stakeholders that could be effective sources of information for the advocacy work needed for AGILE's activities For this contract, PRISM will develop a new strategy in light of recent developments in both activities, such as the move for the open skies agreement with the U.S., the new schemes for ports modernization, and the effort to push for new legislation in Congress.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVE

(a) Legislation for Civil Aviation Liberalization
(b) Implementation of EO 219



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

MEMORANDUM:

FOR : HONORABLE ANIANO A. DESIERTO
Ombudsman

THRU : DIRECTOR NAPOLEON B. BALDRIAS
Chief Legal Counsel

FROM : PAUL ELMER M. CLEMENTE
Legal Counsel

SUBJECT : OMB-ADM-0-97-0519 entitled "PHILIPPINE AIR LINES -versus- VICTOR B. LIMLINGAN"

DATE : 25 June 1998

WITH the premise the respondent is still with the government service, it is respectfully recommended that the penalty of dismissal from service be meted against him for grave misconduct, together with its accessory penalties (under Sec. 9, Rule XIV of the Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No. 292 and Other Pertinent Civil Service Laws) of cancellation of eligibility, forfeiture of benefits and disqualification for reemployment in the government service.

APPROVED / DISAPPROVED :

ANIANO A. DESIERTO
Ombudsman

e Lim

arch 2001, a sensitive post
~~d in FFC~~, appointed even at the
C; endorsed by Vic Limlingan
banned to hold public office for
rights to Singapore.

CAB

r air traffic regulations,
ertie Lim is currently a member.

Bertie Lim's links with the parties and personalities in this scheme are a testament to a large-scale protection of this treacherous wimp in the CAB, yet a wimp with a clout so complex. Certainly, not even the surprising unity of senators of opposite camps chorusing against AGILE-funded projects was enough to ship out Bertie Lim. And the highest position in the land appears to have no say in the matter of Bertie Lim. **Now we wonder, is it really Malacañang that has the power to remove Bertie Lim?**

We are taking up this issue even while we have to pool our small salaries together. We cannot compare our wallets to the bulky ones of those who came in defense of Bertie Lim. They sure have more of them stashed away in a secure place. But what is beyond compare is our will to protect jobs now in the line of fire and our integrity to defend our national interest as Filipino.

### *apwa Pilipino. Hindi natin dapat payagan na sil sa ating bayan ng isang Bertie Lim!*

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Phils. Corp.
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**NAFLU**

WILFREDO T. DELA CRUZ
National President
MANUEL P. ARIAS
1st Vice-President
PABLO S. CATORCE
2nd Vice-President
CRISPIN MENDOZA
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PHILACARE
BONIFACIO ILO
Philippine Feeds
P & R PartS/Machiniries
ASTERIO BAHIAN
Quinta Trading
ALBERTO UY
QAMTIS
DANIEL STRELLA
SUZUKI
JAIME FRANCISCO
SLA Brass

JAIME FRANCISCO
SLA Brass
RODRIGO SAN DIEGO
SuperCast
ROBERTO SANCHEZ
TRITRAN, INC.
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UAI-STCEA
ROBERTO NICOLASURA
VITSON
JOSE TAN
NMPI
CRISPIN MENDOZA
Balayan Sugar Central
WILLY ROMERO
Penta Union

**Mamamayang Kabalikat ng Bansa (MakaBansa)**

Hon. JOEL BADONG
AdHoc Chairman
Municipal Councilor, BAAO Camarines Sur

CYRL MANAOG
Gen. Secretary

**CAMARINES SUR**

Hon. Vice Mayor LUCY B. BUENA
BAAO, Camarines Sur

Hon. EDWIN P. BEDURAL
President
BAAO - Liga ng mga Barangay

Hon. ZEFERINO B. BALLESTEROS JR.
Municipal Councilor

Hon. ELAM BRICIA
Municipal Councilor

**PARANAQUE CITY**
Hon. ERIC BAES
City Councilor

Brgy. Kagawad Mario Santos
SK Kagawad Jennifer Nabor
SK Kagawad Mario Kahulugan
SK Kagawad Jayzell Legaspi

**PASIG CITY** –
Kagawad Ram Cruz
Kagawad Jacob Jabson
Kagawad Virgie Laxamana
Kagawad Nanang Lactaoen
Kagawad Bunny Valenzuela
Kagawad Boyet Cruz
Kagawad Banjo Lipana
Kagawad Cecil Santiago
Kagawad Boy Ambrosio
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SK Chair. Yerra Trillo
Kagawad Rey Rico
Kagawad Michael Malantan
Kagawad Danilo Arellano

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# OPINION

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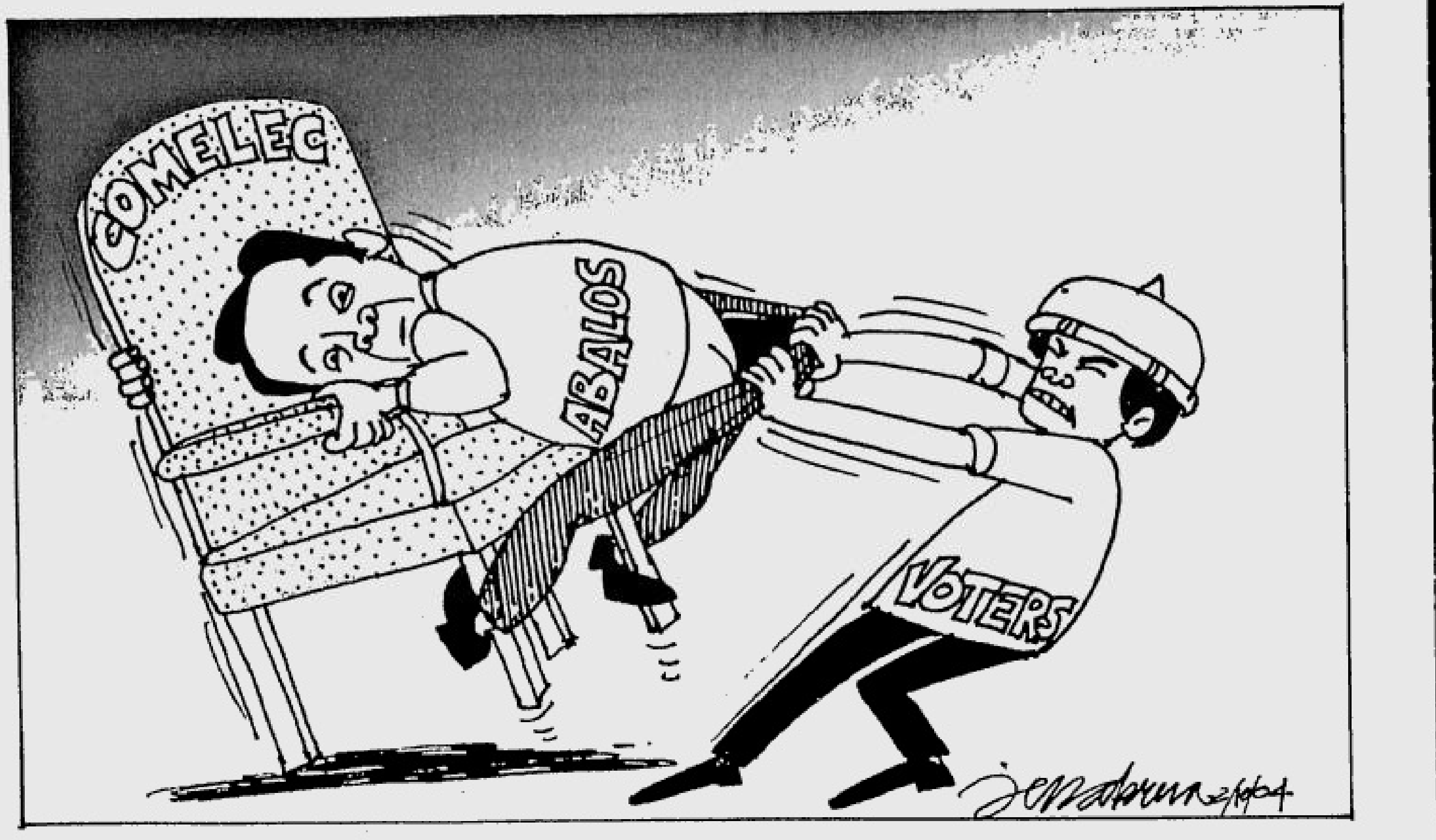


# Real debate

**EDITORIAL**

AN APOCRYPHAL story has it that a candidate for a high government post in the United States was asked by reporters what his platform was. The candidate replied, "I am for God, country and motherhood—and I am against sin."

Now, if that question were asked today of an opposition candidate, and if Jaime Cardinal Sin were still exerting a great influence in campaign politics, probably an opposition candidate would say a similar thing, except that in his answer, "Sin" would be capitalized.

"Motherhood statements" has become a much abused term during political discussions. Candidates want to convince as many voters as possible to vote for them, and so they utter motherhood statements that find general approval among the electorate. Who is not for God? Who is not for country? Who is not for motherhood? Who is not against sin?

Beginning tomorrow, candidates will be mouthing motherhood statements, presenting glittering generalities and uttering the usual platitudes when they hit the campaign trail and go to the hustings. But will motherhood statements make for an intelligent, informed dialogue between the candidates and the voters? Don't the voters deserve to be given some specifics?

Election campaigns are getting to be so programmed and so controlled by campaign managers, public relations experts, media handlers and what-have-you that very often, the voters do not see the "real" candidates, "undressed," bare and natural, and do not get to hear their own thoughts. There have been some, if not many, instances of candidates winning elections not on their real merits but because of public relations makeovers or media hype.

The media, of course, have the principal responsibility of reporting the electoral campaign. Media attention preserves the openness of elections and can force candidates to engage in enlightening political debate. But very often the media are so focussed on the "horse race"—elections as a struggle for power and a competition for the people's votes—that they fail to report adequately on the other vital elements of a campaign. Things like the critical issues, the candidates' records, their qualifications, their character (including their morals) and emotional stability, their management style, campaign strategy and tactics, and the funding of the campaign.

Some journalists think that the media should determine what the issues are in an election campaign. Others say that it is enough that political reporters just report what issues are brought up by the candidates in the course of their barnstorming tours. Jack Germond, a respected political reporter in the United States, says that candidates on the campaign trail set the agenda for press coverage, "whether the press likes it or not." Germond says that if the press were to stress certain issues, it would amount to advocacy.

In the Philippines, at this critical juncture in its political history, it may be necessary for the media to get the major candidates for president to talk on certain issues that would have to be addressed by whoever is elected in May. Unless the media bring up the critical issues and get the candidates to talk about them, there may be no real and substantial campaign debate in this presidential election.

It would be best if a series of tri-media debates could be conducted among the major candidates for president. It would also be great if a certain debate format could be adopted that would allow the candidates to address questions to one another so that there would be extemporaneous, off-the-cuff exchanges among them. Media handlers could prepare scripts and rehearse answers for candidates in a formal debate, and so voters would not get to see them thinking on their feet. An unorthodox debate format may be better.

The coming presidential election is perhaps one of the most crucial elections in the country's history. The nation has been going downhill partly because of some wrong choices the voters made in recent presidential and legislative elections. The media can help arrest this decline if they can promote intelligent voting. Right now, the media are the best institution in a democracy to get the candidates to talk about themselves, their vision for the country (if any), their stand on the issues, and in general, their idea of what government should do and should be.

# Flunkers' treadmill

**VIEWPOINT**

*Juan L. Mercado*

EDUCATION Secretary Edilberto de Jesus' "abrupt" imposition of tougher grading standards was "unrealistic," the Alliance of Concerned Teachers claims. Millions could flunk.

"Whom are we kidding?" the Philippine Human Development Report asks. Flawed grading systems, for years, passed flunkers into a cyberspace world that demanded ever-higher skills, the United Nations Development Programme's publication says.

This controversy revolves around "transmutation." A falling grade of, say 48, is propped up by bogus points—and can "transmutate" into a passing of 75 or more.

In "A New Math: 37.5=75," PHDR illustrates this self-fooling system in "achievement" tests.

Elementary students need answer correctly 15 of 40 questions; 60, if there were 160 items. In high school, the cut off score, for 250 questions, was pegged at 93.

Thus, "the criterion passing score is not 50 percent, it's only 37.5 percent." Extra points are tracked on and this "transmuted" into 75.

"Why has there been no public outcry? Because it was the percentage of pupils 'passed' that was reported, not the percent scores," PHDR notes.

"Transmutation" is *dagdag-bawas*. Grades are padded (*dag-dag*), so the ranks of flunkers are culled (*bawas*).

How? They're shuffled to the next higher (!) grade, where the sorry process is repeated. And taxes fund this flunkers' treadmill. "We made lies our refuge and under falsehood hid ourselves," was Isaiah's lament.

But marred gradings only mask the real issue: educational rot. And consequences of nationwide delusion spill over generations.

In the Third International Mathematics and Science Tests (IMST), our kids were a nondescript 38th, among 42 countries. Singaporeans emerged the topnotchers. In the Fourth IMST, we limped in at 37th—second to the last.

One of five high school students hasn't mastered one language, native or foreign, says University of Tampere's Research Report No 26. They are "semi-linguals," hard put to read, analyze or compute. They talk in disconnected sentences.

You can see the decay all over. "Don't Parking Here," says one sign. "Before Pay Tell Where Get The On, Before Get the Off," a jeepney sign proclaims. A menu ends with: "We Hab sop Drink In Batol."

Parents see diplomas as a escape hatch. Through schooling, their children can break free from the penury their own lack of schooling handcuffs them to. Many work to the bone "*para makatapos*"—so their children can graduate.

"Poverty incidence falls by 3 percent for every one percent improvement in literacy," University of the Philippines School of Economics Prof. Arsenio Balisacan concludes in a regional penury study. "He who can use a writing brush," the Chinese say, "will never beg."

Adult literacy rate here is a hefty 94 percent. It towers over Bangladesh's 61 percent. But "quality deficit" devalues that "achievement."

In today's hi-tech marketplace, the skilled corner the jobs. "If we are so smart, why aren't we rich?" then UNDP representative Terrence Jones once asked.

Worthless diplomas mask a people's deepest hopes being sold short by schools locked into perpetual crisis: from over-worked, under-trained teachers to error-studded textbooks and schoolroom shortages.

On the average, 41 students are packed into a grade school class, 50 plus in high school. Now, Congress has slashed P4 billion from the education department's budget. Just squatting on the new appropriations bill allowed the previous year's pork-laden budget to be "reenacted."

Today's 600,000 plus teachers constitute the country's largest professional occupation. They remain the crucial linchpin. Luke put it very well of a great Teacher: "He taught with great authority."

In an egg-before-the-chicken proposal, ACT suggests: fix other flaws first. That includes better teacher training and stripping away strapped-on "non-teaching" chores, e.g. serving as poll watchers. Would this accommodate a "graduate-at-all-costs" syndrome?

"The only rational way…is to apply the new grading system to kids now entering Grade 1 and apply it as they move up," columnist Manuel Quezon III suggests. Those above Grade 2 will be condemned to inferior education. At least, "it means there is hope for the generation to follow."

The ghastly "triage" reflects the country's narrowing options. Clearly, a nation of fakes will end up a country of paupers. Will we survive?

We've seen bogus birth certificates, phony Marcos war medals, counterfeit land titles, false passports, even manufactured ballots. Ask Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., *dagdag-bawas'* most prominent victim.

Can a half-literate people make the informed decisions a functioning democracy requires?

A less than knowledgeable electorate voted in a patently unqualified movie actor: Joseph Estrada (a.k.a. Jose Velarde). For that we got a "5-K government" of *kamaganak, kumpadre, kaklase, kalasing at kabit*.

"There must be a knowledgeable electorate, abreast of (critical) issues and decisions," Harvard University's John Kenneth Galbraith writes in "The Good Society." "Or there will be a surrender to the voices of ignorance and error."

# Two lessons

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

THE FIRST lesson is for Fernando Poe Jr. himself.

I caught him on TV the other night pleading for the media to stop dwelling on his "love child," and indeed on his other rumored love "children." This had hurt enough people already, he said, chief of them his wife Susan Roces. He swore he loved her dearly to this day, now more than ever. To the wild applause of his audience, who were his favorite people: movie stars, singers and other show-biz folk. "We are private people," he said, and repeated his plea for the media to leave the issue well enough alone.

The lesson, of course, is that you go to politics, you won't be left well enough alone. You will be scrutinized, you will be put under the microscope, you will have all the skeletons in your closet rattled before the public. I did warn him of this last year when I begged him to think of the nation rather than his friends first and not run. I did think at the time he wouldn't run, since he had so little to gain and so much to lose. He had a good name, in part from having comported himself with discretion and in part from getting consistently good press from "movie scribes" throughout his rule as Da King.

The last made him especially vulnerable. You can control the kind of things movie reporters will say about you with the judicious application of carrot and stick—severe punishment, ample reward, a powerful combination—but you cannot control the kinds of things reporters of media generally will say about you. Not always because they are independent and feisty, often because they belong to the other camp and face the same severe sanctions—loss of emolument, gain of punishment—if they do not rake the muck.

I did tell FPJ he will have his life, which has hitherto been largely untouched—he has succeeded in imposing a virtual ban on negative stories about his personal life in the entertainment pages—turned inside out. His tiniest infraction will be turned into transgression, his smallest indiscretion into scandal. He will not get to Malacañang, if he does so at all, unscathed. He will be scarred for life. The heroic aura he has surrounded himself with, courtesy of his movies, will not stand the glare of secular, or cynical, attention. You want to remain private, live private. Do not go into politics.

FPJ's "love child" is just the beginning. More muck will be raked, and it will be thrown at him flush in the face in weeks to come. I can't say he didn't ask for it.

The second lesson is for GMA's dirty tricks department, which is where the muckraking is obviously coming from. Nobody else has the resources and motive to fund so costly an enterprise or indulge in so filthy an exercise. That is that if they want to muckrake, they might as well know the difference between muck and rake in this country. A charge of siring a "love child" isn't going to make FPJ look mucky, it is going to make him look rakish.

If they had done their homework, GMA's dirty-tricks people would have known that no male candidate in this country has yet lost an election for being promiscuous, or unfaithful. In this country, promiscuity and unfaithfulness among male candidates are not a baggage, it is a ticket. It is not just ignored, it is admired. Men are supposed to sow wild oats—the more powerful the men, the wilder, or more plentiful, the oats. One of course is tempted to wonder why the men in this country take that literally, and litter this country with children rather than just scattered seed. But that is nothing to wonder at really. The culture puts a premium on virility, and defines virility not just as having a harem but having a brood. I have heard the comment, privately expressed of course, that good for FPJ he has kids by other women since his wife can't bear them.

Manuel Quezon, a well-known womanizer, then and now was—and is—much admired. The presidents before GMA's time were known womanizers, though Fidel Ramos was less the obvious rake than Erap. He at least did not advertise his dalliances, though unfortunately his dalliances, or at least one of them insisted on advertising it for him. The public in any case did not berate him for looseness, it merely laughed at his taste.

Erap of course needs no amplification. Neither president fell in the public's eyes from being seen as such. More to the point, neither one missed the chance at being president.

The charge of promiscuity in this country hurts only when you are a woman, not when you are a man. The same dirty trick gets to be played on GMA or Loren Legarda, and it will be a kiss of death. Not quite incidentally, more than FPJ, they are the more vulnerable to that charge, or rumor. Unfortunately for them, they cannot be as candid as FPJ (or Erap or Ramos) in admitting anything remotely related to this, true or not. This country's immense tolerance for a man having mistresses and siring children is matched only by its immense intolerance for a woman having an affair or worse having a "love child" by a lover. There, in contrast to terms used for men-rogue, charmer, man-of-the-world, the words used for women are vicious: traitor, adulteress, slut.

GMA's dirty tricks people should really be very careful about treading on dangerous ground. They could end up at the wrong end of the firing line by stoking this country's double standards about men and women.

What could hurt FPJ are those stories one hears about his explosions, which make Raul Roco's much publicized ones look like mild rebukes. The stories about his poking a .45 caliber pistol at people that piss him off in drinking sprees. As the Visayans say though, "*Ambot kung* true."

But back to Lesson No. 1: He won't escape public scrutiny that easily.

# Twisted math

**POLITICAL TIDBITS**

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

THE DEBATE over whether or not the Senate committee report, condemning National Archives director Ricardo Manapat as a forger, was carried in the chamber centers on how each side views the mathematics of it. Committee chair Edgardo Angara and his opposition allies say they have the numbers to carry that report, since the majority's nine abstentions did not constitute a negative vote. But the majority, led by Senate President Franklin Drilon, insists the Senate rules are clear: any motion on the floor must be carried by a majority. In the case of that report, at least 10 votes were needed from the 18 senators present last Friday evening.

* * *

**Interestingly, during the Senate caucus last Thursday evening, no mention at all was made of that report, as the cordial gathering yielded agreement on the specific items to tackle on the last session day the next day. But the minority apparently had its plan: it circulated copies of the one-inch thick report at 10 p.m. Friday and then insisted on a nominal voting half an hour later. According to some majority senators, there was a threat to derail the agenda if the majority didn't agree. The majority begged for time to even read the report, but finally acquiesced to interpellation and nominal voting, where the nine majority abstentions effectively blocked the report.**

**The minority has chosen to interpret the rules its own way, but it seems that there can be no other interpretation of "majority:" it has to be half plus one. Even Flavier now concedes that his group didn't have the majority votes. The moment rules are twisted, trouble begins. Queried as to why the minority resorted to such tactics, Senate chief Drilon replied, *"Eh, panahon na ng digmaan ngayon."***

* * *

Earlier I aired the appeal of reader Amy Bonotan of San Juan, M.M. to Mayor Lito Atienza to abort his plan to celebrate Valentine's Day by conducting a "Lovapalooza" wherein over 5,000 couples will kiss for more than 10 seconds by the Baywalk to break the Guinness Book smooching record of over 4,000 couples in Santiago, Chile. Bonotan argued that such contest would only aggravate the prevailing frivolity and sensuality, as incessantly inflicted by TV and radio shows and other mass media, as well as smut publications. "Do we have to ape everything they do abroad, even if it's against our Filipino customs and mores?" she asks, adding that the country ought to establish a world record in industriousness and hard work, not frivolity. She noted that a big entertainment program is planned for that day at the Baywalk, complete with bands, name performers and shows. Which is just fine, but will Hizzoner abort that contest in deference to Pinoy values?

* * *

**If Atienza remains unmoved by this reader's appeal, Unilever, whose Close Up toothpaste is sponsoring the smooching contest, ought to withdraw support. Over a hundred ladies, led by Divi Guytingco, Dr. Sinforosa Yasay, Analaurie Calero, Tessie Yap, Ving Melo, Rosie Teotico and many others, have vowed they will campaign for a boycott of Unilever products if it pushes through with sponsoring the contest. Actually it's sad that Unilever has to get into this kind of sponsorship after its many good projects in the past. One was the publication of two beautiful coffee-table books on Pasig River and Laguna de Bay, complete with prints of how they looked in the olden times when both bodies of water inspired songs and poetry. The kissing project doesn't jibe with its earlier lofty projects. If I were Unilever's Chair and CEO, Howard Belton, I wouldn't kid around with those potential female boycotters.**

* * *

Last Nov. 30, famed writer Andres Cristobal Cruz celebrated his last birthday and his colleagues, known collectively as "The Ravens," gathered to pay tribute to their very sick colleague who gallantly showed up in a wheelchair. Last Jan. 9, the "Ravens" again gathered at the UP Chapel, this time for a necrological service for Andy. Prof. Amelia Lapeña Bonifacio said they all had something to say about Andy. But retired UP Professor Raul R. Ingles, former UP College of Communications dean, did something more days later: he translated into English Jaime Cardinal Sin's Tagalog "Preface" to Andy's 10-year work of love, which was the Tagalog translation of the poetry written by Pope John Paul II from 1939 to 1979, when he was still Karol Cardinal Wojtyla.

The Pope's poetry collection was first written in Polish and translated into English by famed writer Jerzy Peterkiewiez, appearing in Washington, D.C. in 1985. Andy Cruz's Tagalog translation of John Paul's *"Mga Tula,"* which a critic regards as "elegant, precise, profound and lyrical," took over 10 years. For that, he had to secure the Holy Father's permission with the help of the latter's secretary, Nicolo Suffi. In his introduction, Andy recalled that just before his wife, UP Professor Pat Melendrez Cruz, died in 1993 (in a car accident, together with their child), she urged him to finish the monumental translation.

* * *

**The 322-page book of John Paul's poetry, as translated by Andy, was published in 1994 by businessman Antonio Cabangon Chua, now Ambassador to Laos, in time for the Pope's visit to Manila for World Youth Day in January 1995. It's quite a treat since it features Andy's translation side by side with the English version. Regrettably, however, it has not gained the recognition it deserves, despite the fact that, as Cardinal Sin put it, in the preface translation by Prof. Ingles it is "indeed timely" as "the ideas conveyed seem to portray current endeavors of the Philippine nation to attain true freedom, peace, justice and prosperity." Perhaps what would rescue "Mga Tula" from non-recognition is a critical literary assessment by, say, Fr. Alberto Alejo, S.J.**

# Laughing at the candidates

**AT LARGE**

*Rina Jimenez-David*

"PRESIDENTIABLES" Florian Makapidal Ayoko, Fernan Bopol, Dagul Loko and Pinky Lason, together with "king-maker" Handing Coco-akinito, are all passengers on a "Philippine Spirit" flight. Tragically, the plane crashes on the site of the "Golden Gagamba" nightclub, taking the lives of all the candidates as well as the other passengers and the customers and performers of the Golden Gagamba.

Out of the rubble rises an Angel, who used to be Brittany Spears' guardian angel but was banished to look after the Philippines for her miserable failure to keep the pop star in line. The problem that the Angel presents to God (played by Boy Abunda sporting a white wig) is stark: Hell is full, and can accommodate only four of the five candidates/kingmaker.

Who will avoid a fiery term in hell? Who will be allowed to come back to life and claim the presidency of the Philippines?

This is the plot line of "Electile Dysfunction," a political farce cum musical on the current political situation that has become a sleeper hit among the Pinoy audience. "Electile Dysfunction" had its last night Thursday at the Music Museum but I overheard one producer saying they were looking for another venue "due to insistent public demand."

I do hope Jack B Nimble, the new production company behind "Electile Dysfunction," manages to find an alternate venue because more people deserve to see the play/musical for themselves. Not only is it rip-roaring fun, it's also instructive and provides food for thought to the audience, even if this comes wrapped in comic packaging.

* * *

**TOWARD the end of "Electile Dysfunction," Dyords Javier, who assumes multiple roles in the course of the two-hour performance, delivers a monologue that starts out as a humorous "State of the Nation Address" but takes a serious and even heart-tugging turn at the end.**

**The current campaign season may provide fodder for comics and cynics alike, he seems to be saying, but when we all leave the Music Museum, we might encounter in the parking lot or on the streets some of the millions of Filipinos who are jobless or who have lost all hope of ever finding a job.**

**Our choices do matter, he implies. And while we might laugh at the antics of the candidates portrayed onstage, our choice for the country's next president will have real consequences on the fate of those Filipinos who cannot afford to watch performances at the Music Museum.**

**Javier's powerful monologue sets the stage for what has got to be "Electile Dysfunction's" hottest portion which involves the oft-rowdy participation of the audience.**

**Finally despairing of ever coming up with a working formula to determine the most deserving candidate, the Angel proposes to God that the members of the audience decide who "burns in hell" and who lives to assume the presidency.**

**The house lights go on, the candidates themselves are deputized to count the raised hands, and the audience is asked to finally put their convictions where their laughs were.**

* * *

AS ONE by one the candidates are asked to stand before the audience and be judged, everyone has a good time rooting for their favorite or booing the ones they're rejecting.

While I noticed a few in the audience squirming in their seats and refusing to raise their hands in the classic "thumbs down" gesture, which we were asked to do if we wanted a candidate to burn in hell, the great majority participated with loud gusto in the impromptu referendum.

I thought the show's producers and creators would take the safe route and condemn everyone—Ate Flo, Fernan Bopol, Dagul Loco, Pinky and "Bossing"—to eternal damnation. So I was quite surprised that a winner emerged: Ate Flo on the night we were in the audience.

A friend who was present at the next night's performance said Dagul Loco emerged the winner and sole survivor. Apparently, there are people in the theater who really do count the raised hands, and so far the predominantly middle-class audience has tended to divide their loyalties between Makapidal Ayoko and Loco.

I don't know, though, if this is a real reflection of their electoral preferences or of their appreciation for the performances. I thought, for one, that the young woman portraying Ate Flo captured her essence perfectly. And it didn't hurt that, like her model, she was also vertically challenged.

* * *

**MY HUSBAND and I left Music Museum buoyed by two hours of laughter yet strangely sobered by the gravity of our task ahead as citizens and voters.**

**The audience of "Electile Dysfunction" may enjoy the luxury of laughing at the foibles of our leaders and those presuming to aspire for the highest office of the land, but how accurately do our sentiments reflect those of the great majority of Filipinos? Are we not, like the Roman nobility, feasting and partying away while Rome—our country—burned? We might find great comic possibility in Fernan Bopol's cluelessness, or in Pinky Lason's trigger-happy personality, but why do so many Filipinos seem willing to overlook these failings? Ate Flo's tango with her husband and their sparring over Jose Pidal and related issues, with Ate Flo insisting *"Totoo ba toh?"* may draw laughter, but there are serious implications on the quality of governance and leadership.**

**Then again, if we allowed the so-called "broader issues" to intrude into the broad farce onstage, we might not be able to laugh at all.**

**Many thanks to the people behind "Electile Dysfunction" not just for the laughs and the good time, but for the momentary escape from political realities. We have the next few months to ponder them and to live with the consequences of our choices.**

# The 'electability' factor

**COMMENTARY**

*Belinda A. Aquino*

HONOLULU—Elections, elections. They are all over the place. The US and Philippine presidential seasons don't always coincide, but this year they do. And our huge neighbor to the south, Indonesia, is also gearing up for its first presidential popular elections, in which the people themselves will vote directly for their chief executive, unlike in previous parliamentary elections. This is a revolutionary shift in the country's political orientation. Indonesia has had few national elections to begin with. This one should be most interesting, with Megawati as the central player.

The US Democratic hopefuls are engaged in a frenetic struggle to capture their party's nomination for the general elections in November. But before I speculate on any of the candidates, now down to a durable few, a word is necessary on the process of whittling down their numbers until there's only one to become the party's standard bearer. This process, which entails competing in a series of primaries and caucuses in selected states, is a little understood aspect of American politics. My students, who are political science majors, are clueless. And I don't blame them because the typical American voter doesn't have a clue either about these seemingly obsolete but still operative institutions like the Electoral College. You can lose the popular vote, like George W. Bush in the 2000 elections, but still win the majority of the Electoral College delegates to become president.

The primaries and caucuses usually start around February and end in June of a given presidential year. They are nominating processes or mechanisms to separate the grain from the chaff. Most states use the primary to choose the delegates to the national convention. A few states, like Iowa, use the caucus, which starts with precinct-level meetings throughout the state. There are open and closed caucuses, the latter being limited to registered party members.

The earliest of these nominating processes—the New Hampshire primary and the Iowa caucus—are the most important because front-running candidates can secure early much-needed media attention, which in turn can attract financial and other kinds of support. Before the New Hampshire and Iowa events, candidates spend months courting voter support in these two states. A candidate who does well in these two events has a headstart in the process.

When these primaries and caucuses come to an end, it now becomes clear which candidates from the original field have won their respective parties' nominations. In the 2000 elections, for instance, George W. Bush arrived at the Republican national convention with the nomination in his pocket, having defeated challengers like Sen. John McCain in the primaries. Likewise Al Gore went to the Democratic Party convention in Los Angeles, already a winner in the preceding Democratic primaries.

Thus, the primary or caucus is a "winnowing" process with the principal purpose of selecting which candidate has the best chance of winning the elections against the other party's candidate. This purpose may be summed up in one concept: "electability." There is no one definition of this term. It's not even found in the newest dictionary. It is a construct of qualities and requirements that a certain candidate must have in order to be considered as having the best chance among others to win the presidency. It connotes charisma, among other personal characteristics. The primary is really a race over a long mile to see who will fall by the wayside.

Unfortunately, this is not the norm in Philippine presidential politics. A candidate who loses in a nomination fight usually sulks, kicks up a storm, makes all kinds of charges, bolts the party, undermines the winner and forms his or her own party. Or the losing candidate can simply become a *"balimbing"* and join the other party or become its standard bearer. Ferdinand Marcos bolted the Liberal Party in the 1965 elections after accusing then President Diosdado Macapagal of reneging on his promise not to run for reelection.

Now in the US, Sen. John Kerry has emerged as "Mr. Electability." He has earned this as the winner of the crucial New Hampshire primary and Iowa caucus—bittersweet victories because he was an underdog. Pre-primary favorite Howard Dean, former Vermont governor, already had the endorsement of Al Gore before the primaries and he was highly touted to win both New Hampshire and Iowa. But along the way, something happened. The other candidates pounced on him mercilessly. He was branded as "arrogant." Not only did Dean lose Iowa, but New Hampshire as well. He did not win any of the ensuing seven primaries, of which five were won by Kerry.

So, electability is an elusive, transitory quality. Dean was considered eminently electable in the beginning because of his principled stand on the war with Iraq and against many of Bush's initiatives. But Dean probably overdid himself, especially with his screaming and yelling around after the Iowa caucus. He was his own worst enemy. Slowly, voters began to see him as "unpresidential." Meanwhile, Kerry maintained his low key demeanor. Of course, it helped that he got the endorsement of Sen. Ted Kennedy. The magic of the old name is still there somehow. It cannot hurt.

Kerry has gained momentum, and it is likely that he will make it to the national convention. Assuming that he will be the Democratic standard bearer, can he beat Bush? Is he electable as president? The final judgment will be made by the American voters in November.

# Total wreck

**YOUNG BLOOD**

*Christian Rivero*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.*

IN TIMES of doubt I always like to remember the trials of our heroes and the sacrifices they made for us.

Jose Rizal is foremost among my heroes. He was a man whose love for the country is unparalleled. Of course, many others died for the cause of freedom and democracy. But what I like most about Rizal was that he wrote, got hurt, fell in love, made mistakes and dreamt nice things for the country.

Nowadays, it appears that his aspirations of having a great and independent country remain just that: aspirations. We are still a country weak and vacillating. Our leaders are at best a joke. They know nothing about real governance, but they have mastered the art of politicking that wins elections. Our elections are similar to fiestas. By route and by custom, they happen every three years.

Our politicians are little more than entertainers. Only a few deserve our respect. Most of them are people who are popular and bored with their lives, people who need to feed their insatiable hunger for power and prey on our weaknesses. They think that by securing seats in the government, they become better persons. Their delusion sadly costs us our future.

As for us, overwhelmed by all the campaign glitz, we have forgotten the need to remain critical. We are drowned in apathy. Platforms of government are treated as if they mean nothing. Many of us are bored by speeches. What is important to us is that the candidates can sing and dance. While we are held in suspense by the latest controversy involving Kris Aquino, we neglect to examine the personal stand and views of the candidates on the different issues confronting us.

Show biz is the rage, and sadly, we cannot distinguish what is real from fantasy. As a consequence, we troop to the voting precincts with fatalistic prayers that though the candidates we're voting into office are a bunch of walking mistakes, they will perform very well when they win.

Such a hope always ends up unfulfilled. Politicians look after their own interests. Afterwards do we not feel like a prostitute, who has been cast away after the carnal act? In politics, ethics is esoteric while power and money mean might.

I do not think our politicians are giving the youth a good example. I see no Rizal in our midst. Very few among our leaders deserve our respect and confidence.

A few years ago an American writer said that ours was a "damaged culture." I disagree. Instead, I say that we are nothing less than a total wreck. With the quality of our leaders, it is hard denying what is obvious. For instance, our country is far from what a functioning democracy should be. We do not learn from our past. How many Edsas do we need before we get our act together? Let us face it, ours is barely a functioning state and our politicians are further imperiling our chances of recovery.

Is this the country Rizal wanted? I hope that our politicians ask themselves that question.

It is also incumbent upon us, as citizens, to stop and look at ourselves. Consider what we have contributed so far to improve our lot. We were once a proud people. Now we just heap insult on ourselves, dismissing our faults as something embedded in our character. While this attitude helps us sometimes to survive, what is more useful is for us to act in the interest of our country. In consonance with the dreams instilled in us by our heroes, we must realize that the term "Filipino" is not just a word, it is also a state of mind: revolutionary, pro active, responsible and conscious of his acts.

Our country is in disarray. Some things need to be done and fast. I doubt if we can trust our politicians alone to rectify the country's mistakes. Instead, let us think that we all can contribute positively. We must not remain impotent and accept things passively. Otherwise we will not make the country any better than it is today. By now we should have grown tired of engaging in wishful thinking. We must act now while we still can.

*Christian Rivero, 26, is finishing his master's in political science at the Ateneo de Manila University.*

# Salt of the Earth

*JP Yamsuan*

SOMEBODY I had just met at a party asked me, "How can you stomach working in the government?" I was taken aback by the question of the Chinoy painter/businessman/fashionista which was laced with sarcasm. But I quickly realized that few people my age would consider being inside a government office much less working for it.

I can't blame them. Much have been said about our government, most of them unflattering. Still I took up the challenge. "I want the results of my researches to have an impact on the lives of people who have so little," I told him. "Just as you devote so much of your time to your art and exhibits, I give utmost consideration to who will benefit from my work. I used to work for a capitalist organization and it was terrible. The company was more concerned about getting the consumers' money."

"So you did market research," he guessed correctly. "But that work pays good money."

"Yes, it did. But as I told you, I want my researches to be of use to humanity."

A blank stare.

I continued: "You know, Filipinos have this tendency to give importance to things that are sensational rather than those things that matter more to them and their future. Take the case of this actor who fell from…"

"Ah! Miko. I met him and his cousin at a party. His death was such a waste. *Sayang.* He could've been a great actor. For the arts."

"You call that art? I mean, what they do in show business? I'd rather call it dream weaving."

"His *tito* works in the government, right?" he asked.

"But what's the difference? Government and show biz, show biz and government—the people are the same. Even the things they do are basically the same: using fantasy to cover up reality."

"Exactly my point," he said. "So why do you want to work for them? Your work is futile."

"It's not," I protested. "My work helps."

But it was clear he could not understand this side of my story. And I don't blame him. After all, when a well-traveled friend joked that his paintings resembled a Rorschach Inkblot test, the remark was met with a clueless look by everyone around, except me. I had a hearty laugh.

*JP Yamsuan, 25, heads the policy research component of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project of the Department of Education. He is also taking his master's in sociology.*

LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

# Gordon is no lawbreaker

MAY we clarify the negative perception created in the mind of your readers by the allegations of Ambeth R. Ocampo's column, "Gordon's Latest Folly." (PDI, 01/16/04)

The Light and Sound museum project, envisioned by former Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, simply aims to inspire Filipinos to break through the "walls of their minds" in the same manner our heroes broke free from the fetters imposed by foreign oppressors. It was never meant to be a springboard for debate and discussion.

We sought Mr. Ocampo many times for his advice on the script. Up to its final stages, Secretary Gordon tried to contact him but to no avail.

On the question of whether Rizal Park is a historical site, and on the legality of the Lapu-Lapu monument:

Fact: In a letter dated Dec. 5, 2003 to Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, a copy of which was given to the Department of Tourism, Mr. Ocampo, as concurrent chair of the National Historical Institute, offered no objection to the project. Observations were raised, but not protestations. He even admitted that Rizal Park has not been declared by the NHI as a national historical landmark. As such, P.D. No. 1505 does not apply to it, and, therefore, it was unnecessary to secure any authority from the NHI to erect the Lapu-Lapu Monument.

Was Secretary Gordon in violation of P.D. 1505 despite the Jan. 5, 2004 NHI letter advising the DOT to "cease and desist from constructing the monument on Agrifina Circle..."?

On Dec. 16, 2003, when the project was in full swing, Mr. Ocampo wrote the DOT. Again, there was no outright objection to the project. Neither did Mr. Ocampo withdrew his "no objection to the project" statement.

We believe that there is a link between Lapu-Lapu and Rizal in the struggle for freedom and independence. While Rizal wielded his pen against the abuses of Spanish colonization, Lapu-Lapu, four centuries earlier, raised his *kampilan* when the price of peace was to bow before a foreign king.

Furthermore, the Lapu-Lapu Monument was conceptualized to be an iconic rallying point for Filipinos. Agrifina Circle was chosen as its site because by tradition, each Philippine president takes his oath of office at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park, before a line of vision of monuments dedicated to national heroes. Thus, in a straight line of vision, a president-elect takes his oath to Jose Rizal, whose monument is at the edge of Roxas Boulevard, and onwards to other heroes and martyrs and finally to Lapu Lapu, the country's first victorious freedom fighter.

Secretary Gordon, in his entire life and career as a public servant, has always respected the rule of law. To describe him as a "law breaker" has no basis in fact and is unfair.

**—MA. CARISSA O. COSCOLLUELA,**
**chief of Staff,**
**Office of Hon. Richard J. Gordon**

# No need to die

THERE is no need for fishermen to lose precious lives from the sinking of a boat. Modern technology has provided us "unsinkable" boats made of a lamination of polyurethane, an affordable material available today in the Philippines.

It is incumbent in good governance that the poor and destitute fisherfolk are introduced to modern technology.

The executive and legislative branches of government must institute the proper laws to prevent the loss of innocent lives due to boat sinking. The Bureau of Fisheries, Coast Guard, Navy, local government, barangay captains and all boat owners must be made to comply with a law that requires the use of "unsinkable boats."

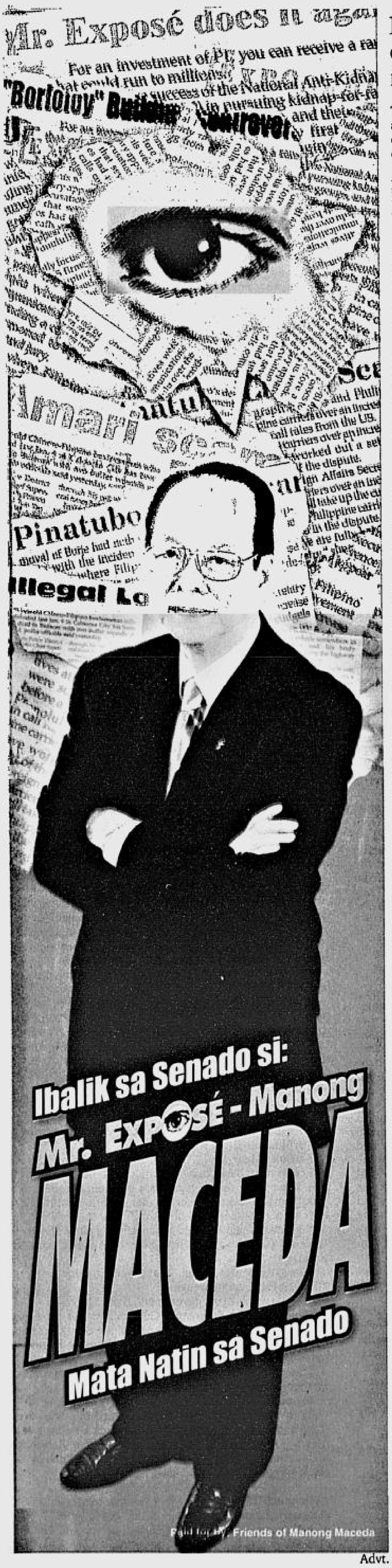
Our political leaders should give the matter serious attention and consideration and make it a major issue in the upcoming elections.

**—SERGIO J. MONTINOLA,**
**consultant, 4 Saturn St.,**
**Bel Air 2, Makati City**

# Ridiculous surveys

OBVIOUSLY, the media cannot stop those crazy surveys. The editorials, however, should divulge the ridiculous and ludicrous characters of the surveys, like surveys asking "who has experience with the presidency" and such silly questions or foregone conclusions. What makes a survey is the quality of the question that is sought to be answered. This I believe is the function of the editorials—to do an evaluation of certain information, event or action that claims to be worth noting, doing or saying. When editorials are absent for this purpose, there is something wrong.

**—S. AURORA N. RIEL, PSC 80 BOX**
**20909, APO AP 96367-0094**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Advt.

# DENR clarifies on illegal logging in Kudarat

THIS has reference to the INQUIRER article "DENR to probe officials in cahoots with illegal loggers in Kudarat town." (PDI, 02/01/04)

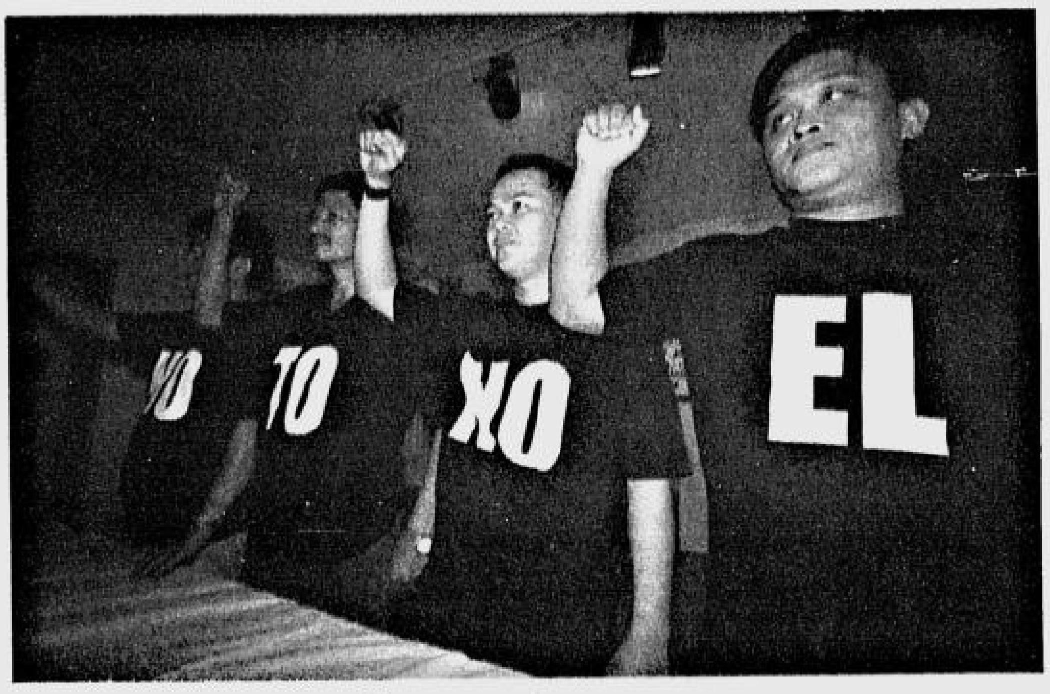
We wish to thank you for reporting what the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region XII is doing to combat illegal logging in this part of the country. However, we would like to make the following clarifications, lest we be misunderstood.

The administrative proceedings being conducted by the DENR XII on the subject case are preparatory to the filing of charges against those responsible in the sourcing and transport of the 32,021.65 bd. ft. of undocumented lumber. The "hot lumber" were seized from the compound owned by a certain Engr. Joaquin Concha, a resident of Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat.

On the allegations that some DENR personnel are into illegal logging in Sultan Kudarat province, I wish to point out though that as of this writing, we have not found any evidence linking any DENR employee to the said illegal logging case. However, to ensure an impartial and objective investigation, we are not ruling out the possible involvement of government personnel.

The insinuations indirectly linking former DENR Sec. Antonio H. Cerilles to the logging case is baseless, unfounded and unfair. These are mere conjectures which should not find space in your prestigious newspaper. Dragging the name of former Secretary Cerilles into this case only added to the confusion that the case has whipped up.

**—JIM O. SAMPULNA,**
**OIC-regional executive director,**
**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**



# Guard against No-El

FROM WHAT is happening these days, it seems that someone is painting a "no election scenario" this May. Soldiers are said to be planning a coup, the opposition is said to be hatching a destabilization plot, the Supreme Court ruled the Comelec contract for the automated elections illegal and Comelec employees themselves are reported to be gearing up for a sit-down strike because of their delayed salaries and benefits.

At first glance, it may seem that these incidents are not connected with each other. But the direction they are pointing indicates a concerted effort to stop the coming elections or create a scenario justifying its postponement.

The Macapagal administration may swear to high heavens that it has nothing to do with these developments, but on analysis, the only ones that will benefit from this scenario is Ms Macapagal herself and her administration.

With her popularity sagging and that of her opponents, particularly Poe and Roco, increasing, the President needs all the time and resources she can muster to hold on to power.

What we must do is to ensure that the elections pushes through as scheduled and frustrate any attempt to subvert the verdict of the people.

**—ASHLEY DY,**
**chairperson,**
**National Network of Agrarian Reform Advocates-Youth Sector,**
**17-D Kasing-kasing St.,**
**Quezon City**

# ECC reply to employee's complaint

THIS pertains to the letter of Alberto Paragas which was published in the INQUIRER last Dec. 30, 2003, regarding his claim for employees compensation benefits under Presidential Decree 626, as amended.

In his letter, he stated that he had suffered spinal lumbar in Dec. 26, 1996 and that this caused disability. It is in no way being disputed. But this does not automatically qualify him as a beneficiary for employees compensation benefits, since it has yet to be determined if his injury was work-related.

Please be informed that on Dec. 3, 2003, we requested the Social Security System head office to elevate his case to us for review.

Attached is a copy of the letter to the SSS.

Rest assured that we will inform Paragas of the final action of the commission.

**—ELMOR D. JURIDICO,**
**executive director,**
**Employees Compensation Commission, 3/F ECC Bldg., 355 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City**

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Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF LA UNION
City of San Fernando

**OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR**

**INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY PREQUALIFICATION & TO BID**

The Provincial Government of La Union, through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), San Fernando City, La Union, invites suppliers, manufacturers and/or distributors classified accordingly and registered with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) or SEC, to apply for pre-qualification and if qualified to bid for:

| QUANTITY | UNIT | DESCRIPTION | ABC |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2,850 | cu.m. | Aggregate Base Course | P 513,000.00 |
| 2,270.10 | cu.m. | Class "A" Concrete Mix | 5,902,260.00 |
| 710 | pcs. | 16 mm dia x 6 m Deformed Bars | 188,150.00 |
| 88 | pcs. | 10 mm dia x 6 m Deformed Bars | 9,240.00 |
| 3,364 | bd.ft | Formworks | 107,648.00 |
| 117 | kgs. | Wires & Nails | 4,680.00 |
| 12,000 | pcs. | Potted Lakatan tissue culture | 180,000.00 |
| 100,000 | pcs. | Lakatan tissue cultured banana plantlets | 650,000.00 |
| 18,000 | pcs. | Cardaba banana plantlets | 117,000.00 |
| 106,000 | pcs. | 2x2x6 black gusseted 002 plastic bags | 53,000.00 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Issuance of Bid Documents | - February 13, 2004 |
| Pre-Bid Conference | - February 16, 2004, 2:00 p.m.<br>Diego Silang Hall |
| Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Requirements | - March 04, 2004, 9:00 a.m.<br>Diego Silang Hall |
| Opening of Bids | - March 04, 2004, 9:00 a.m.<br>Diego Silang Hall |

All particulars relative to bonds, pre-bid conference, evaluation of bids, post-qualifications, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations, as amended and other applicable rules and regulations.

The Provincial Government of La Union reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect contained therein, and to award the suppliers, manufacturers and/or distributors whose proposal as evaluated by the Provincial BAC of La Union the most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) GEOFFREY S. TILAN, Ed. D
Provincial Administrator
BAC, Chairman

(PDI – February 3 & 10, 2004)

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NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

**INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE JUNK ITEMS**

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: February 26, and 27, 2004, 2:00 p.m.
The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the following junk and unserviceable items:

**SCHEDULE - I: February 26, 2004, 2:00 PM, MMD Bidding Room, Bldg-1, NPC-HO, Diliman, QC**

| ITEM NO. | DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION | MINIMUM BID PRICE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | One (1) lot scrap metals consisting of aluminum claddings, radiators corroded drums and GI sheets, pipes motors, post and suspension insulators steel beams, fire extinguishers steel plates, copper wires, and other junk items located at the barricaded area of the Waste Segregation Area, Plant B, Mak-Ban GPP Bo. Bitin, Bay, Laguna | P 1,645,000.00/lot |
| 2. | One (1) lot of assorted cables consisting of co-axial, telephone, power and control cables located at Bataan TPP, Limay, Bataan. | P 1,040,550.00/lot |
| 3. | One (1) lot scrap metals consisting of deformed and corroded rebars, wire rope cuttings, unserviceable steel towers and obsolete steel towers located at Kalayaan Warehouse | P 215,600.00/lot |
| *4. | One (1) lot expired AERO Foam, approximately 88 pails and 11 drums of waste/sludge oil located at Navotas Tank Farm, Navotas Fish Port, Navotas, Metro Manila | P 7,436.00/lot |

* DENR permit is required for participating bidders

**SCHEDULE - II: February 27, 2004, 2:00 PM, MMD Bidding Rm., Bldg.-1, NPC-HO, Diliman, QC**

| ITEM NO. | DESCRIPTION and LOCATION | MIN. BID PRICE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | One (1) unit junk, FMC Crane, 50-tonner located at BTPP, Limay Bataan | P 660,000.00 |
| 2. | Barite, approximately 4,114 bags, 100 lbs/bag located at Mak-Ban GPP, Bo. Bitin, Bay-Laguna | P 326.00/bag |
| 3. | One (1) lot splatter board made of plastics, approximately 10,000 kgs located at Mak-Ban GPP, Bo. Bitin, Bay, Laguna | P 2.00/kg. |
| *4. | One (1) unit unserviceable, retired and cannibalized electric generating set "CKD" Brand, 448 KW rating, Unit No. 5 of Bantayan DPP, Bantayan, Cebu | P 472,000.00 |

* Bidding will be simultaneous with SPUG Cebu Office.

**ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

1. **PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE**
2. **LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER OR AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (2002 ORIGINAL OR CERTIFIED TRUE COPY OF BIR).**

**All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for the said bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.**

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from S.V. Lomuntad Jr. at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. For Visayas bidders, Schedule II, item no. 4; One (1) unit unserviceable Genset "CKD", the bidding shall be conducted simultaneously at NPC SPUG Office, 4th Floor BF Bldg., Escano Street, Cebu City and the NPC Head Office. Visayas bidders may secure bid form for P500.00 for the said schedule from Mr. Edmundo A. Veloso, Jr., Department Manager, SPUG Visayas or call telephone no. 256-3694 **Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 p.m. February 25, 2004 for Schedule-I, February 26 for Schedule-II.**

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI - Feb. 9, 10 & 11, 2004)

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# Armed men go to Masbate for elections

**LEGAZPI CITY—Masbate police director Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo on Saturday said armed men believed to be from Metro Manila, the Visayas and Mindanao have arrived in Masbate reportedly in connection with the coming May elections.**

He made the disclosure after four unidentified gunmen in camouflage attire fired at one of the houses of Mayor Helen Bunan of San Fernando town (in Ticao Island, Masbate) on Thursday morning. No one was hurt during the attack, he said, since the house was unoccupied.

The attack happened a day after a military officer was killed and at least 11 military personnel and a civilian were wounded when New People's Army rebels ambushed them in Barangay Pagkiyawan, Uson, Masbate on Wednesday.

Mapalo said they were investigating the intelligence reports they had received.

He had also ordered the chiefs of police in the province to intensify checkpoints and gun ban operations in strategic areas to ensure peace and order throughout the election period.

Mapalo said additional forces from the Army and police have already been deployed to different parts of Masbate to reinforce the local police force. These are composed of a company of the 5th Scout Rangers, the Bravo Company of the Police Regional Mobile Group and a group of militiamen belonging to the 2nd Infantry Battalion.

Masbate is one of the election hot spots in Bicol declared by the Commission on Elections this year based on its experience during past elections.

Bunan is seeking reelection in the May 10 elections and is being challenged by Rep. Vida Espinosa.

She is the third Bicol official to be reportedly harassed by armed men, after Mayor Armando Guerrero of Gigmoto, Catanduanes and Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis.

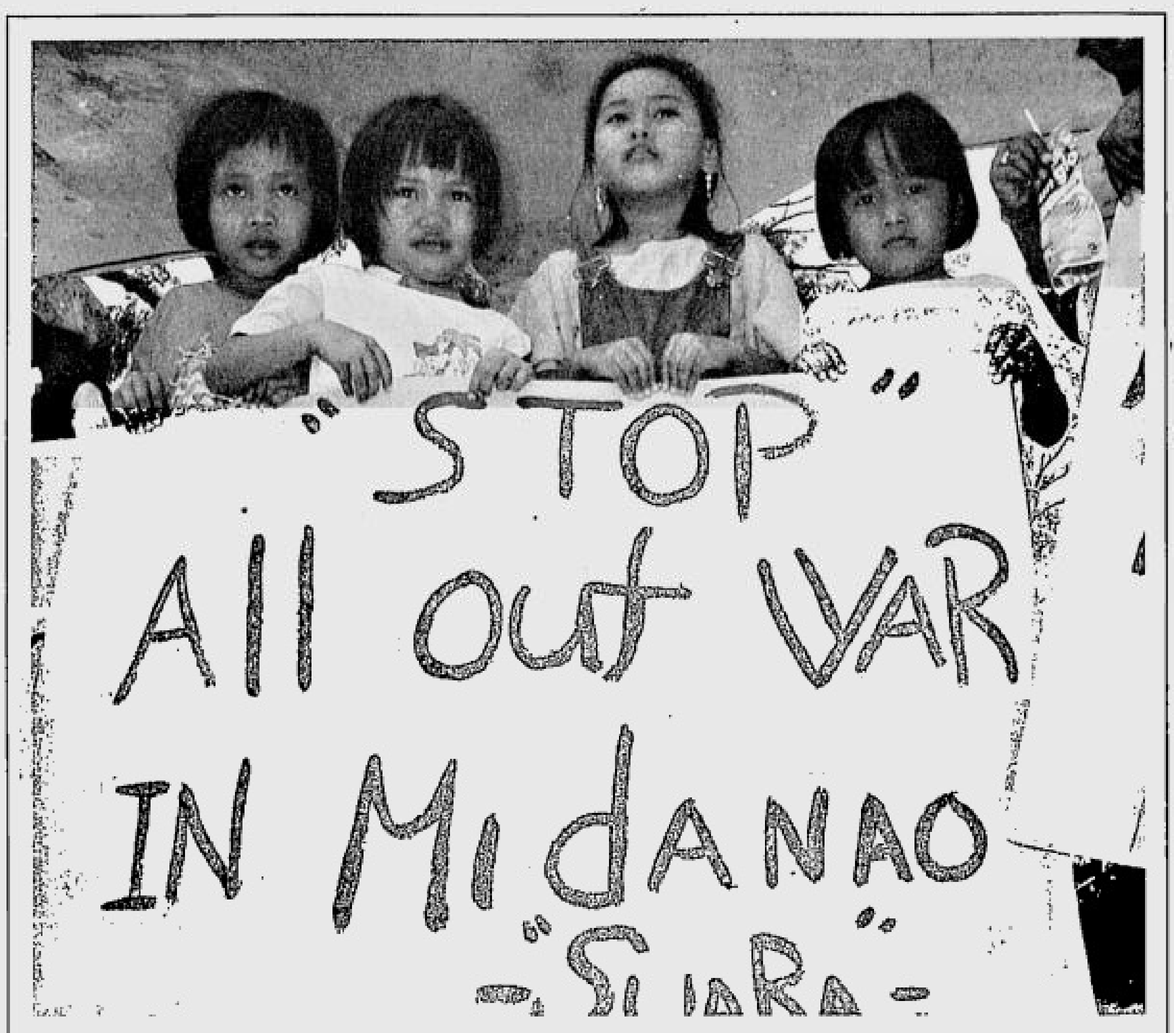
The elections are starting to heat up and in Abra, a candidate and a bodyguard of a politician were slain. The killing was believed election-related.

Ceferino Callabag, 54, was shot dead inside a grocery in Danglas, Abra Sunday night, said Senior Supt. Artemio Hicban, Abra police chief.

Callabag was running for a seat in the municipal council.

Gregorio Castañeda, 44, bodyguard of candidate for mayor Wilmer Panabang was shot dead outside the candidate's house in the town of Penarrubia near Danglas Saturday.

The suspects in the two killings remain unidentified. *Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau with an AFP report*



**CHILDREN'S CLAMOR**

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

**A letter is missing in these children's spelling of Mindanao at a rally in Davao City recently, but it doesn't diminish their desire for peace on the island, battered by decades of guerrilla warfare and military operations.**

# 2,000 rally in Dumaguete vs sugar smuggling

**By Carla P. Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

DUMAGUETE CITY—About 2,000 sugar planters and workers staged a rally on Sunday to protest the drop in mill gate prices of sugar.

They warned President Macapagal-Arroyo that they will register their displeasure in their ballots in the May elections if she fails to stop sugar smuggling, which they blamed for the free-fall in prices.

The protesters marched from the Capitol Lagoon Park to the Bacolod Public Plaza. Some of them carried placards calling for the resignation of Sugar Regulatory Administrator James Ledesma.

They poured sugar across San Juan Street in front of the Bacolod Public Plaza and put a wreath on top to symbolize the death of the sugar industry, which they blamed on the lack of adequate help from the Macapagal administration.

Mill gate sugar prices dropped last week to a low of P638 per 50-kilo bag (lkg) from P820 at the start of the milling season last year. But retail prices of sugar remained the same. Many sugar producers blamed the low prices on unabated sugar smuggling.

Manuel Lamata, president of the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines, said the rally was only the beginning of their protests.

"If no action is taken on our complaints, I can assure you that the next one is going to be very big ... it will be nationwide," he said.

"If the President fails to address the problem, we will definitely go against her in the May polls," Lamata said.

He said Malacañang might have thought they were not desperate. "We are desperate because these are really desperate prices. We have never encountered this kind of a problem where fertilizer is more expensive than one bag of sugar," he added.

Lamata said they met President Macapagal thrice in Malacañang and she assured them that something would be done. Still, he added, nothing happened.

"The proof of the pudding is in the price. Smuggled sugar is still coming in," he said.

Lamata reiterated that Ms Macapagal should sign an executive order raising the tariff on colored sugar from three percent to 65 percent to prevent the technical smuggling of sugar.

"She should stop smuggling on its tracks and put the smugglers in jail. That is what we want her to address immediately, not after the elections. We are sick and tired of promises," said Lamata.

He, however, said he does not support calls for Ledesma's resignation because the SRA chief does not have police powers.

Ledesma, however, said President Macapagal was very concerned and was doing everything within her power to solve the sugar crisis.

Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella said Ms Macapagal had also agreed to hold a summit of sugar industry leaders in Malacañang on Feb. 17 to discuss concerns of the industry.

# BIR agent entrapped, faces raps, jail term

BACOLOD CITY—An examiner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue is facing charges for allegedly extorting money from a businessman in exchange for a readjustment of his tax delinquency.

Lily Aguirre Doblar, 50, of this city, will be charged on Tuesday with violation of the Anti Graft and Corrupt Practices Act before the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas.

Doblar was detained at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group headquarters at the Camp Alfredo Montelibano Sr. following her arrest on Saturday in an entrapment operation conducted on 6th Street in Bacolod.

Senior Insp. Moises Villaceran, 601st CIDG provincial field officer, said Doblar was caught in the act of accepting P13,000 in marked money from complainant Anthony Javelosa, a barangay captain of Aguisan, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental.

Doblar is an examiner assigned to the Binalbagan BIR district office that covers Negros Occidental towns and cities from Bago City to Hinobaan. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

# *Vizcaya seeks tighter noose on plant smuggling*

**By Melvin Gascon**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani on Wednesday called on lawmakers to enact a law that would curb smuggling of planting materials in the province, in an effort to protect the thriving local citrus industry.

Agbayani made the call amid growing concern over the recent discovery of the tristeza virus infection in some citrus plantations in upland Alfonso Castañeda town, some 170 km from this capitol town.

"What we need at this point is a law that would regulate the transport of planting materials and authorize our (agriculture) personnel to ban the entry of shipment of diseased plants," he said.

Earlier, Fortunato Battad, retired pomology professor and former president emeritus of the Central Luzon State University in the Science City of Muñoz in Nueva Ecija, said the presence of tristeza virus in orchards in the Casecnan area could have devastating effects on the province's citrus industry.

"If this infection is not eradicated soonest, your growing citrus industry could be wiped out in the next three to five years," Battad said during a citrus development forum here.

According to the Food and Fertilizer Technology Center website, tristeza, also known as "quick decline," is the most destructive disease of citrus that was reported to have wiped out the citrus industries in many countries. Affected trees become dwarfed and show less vigor, and then die.

Battad said the virus might have been brought into the Casecnan area due to the importation from other provinces of infected rambutan, durian and other rootstocks.

Agbayani, however, said existing quarantine laws do not cover plants, which make checkpoint personnel helpless to check the movement of planting materials to and from the province.

"The province has been free of the FMD (foot-and-mouth disease) because of our effective quarantine system that is backed up by a provincial ordinance. This has given us the authority to do whatever is necessary to prevent the spread of the disease, even to the extent of exterminating infected animals," he said.

"The owners (of seized animals) went to the courts to complain but they always lost because we had the legal basis," he said. "We could not do the same with (shipments of) planting materials, though these might already be sources of diseases..."

Officials of the California Energy-Casecnan, reported that the virus was detected on citrus orchards in three villages in the Casecnan multi-purpose irrigation and power project in Alfonso Castañeda.

# Hero of Basilan siege reprimanded by AFP

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Special Operations Command (Socom) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines reprimanded a Lamitan, Basilan hero and demoted to a rank lower four of his men involved in the beating of three civilians inside a police station in the evening of Oct. 26 last year here.

No less than Maj. Gen. Allan Cabalquinto, Socom chief, signed the memorandum reprimanding Army Scout Ranger Capt. Ruben Guinolbay, acknowledged hero of the June 2, 2001 Lamitan siege.

Cabalquinto also ordered the demotion of Cpl. Edwin Romero, Cpl. Romulo Sumain, Pfcs. Jesus Moret and Rodrigo Husain to a rank lower.

Guinolbay and his men were facing administrative and criminal charges for storming the Bula police station and beating up Pedro Animas IV and his two companions in front of policemen.

It turned out that Animas and his friends were not the same group who figured in a brawl with two of Guinolbay's men. Animas and his friends were just invited by the police to give oral accounts of what took place inside the bar.

The beating incident sparked public uproar, prompting the city council to declare Guinolbay persona non grata.

However, a few weeks ago, Guinolbay, accompanied by his wife, appeared before the city council to apologize and ask for the recall of a resolution declaring him an unwanted person here.

The members of the city council accepted the Army officer's apology but subjected his request to further study.

In a memorandum, the Socom chief claimed that Guinolbay and his men violated the Articles of War 97 and 105.

Because of this, they would not be eligible for promotion within one year starting from the date they received the censure and demotion order.

Apart from the sanctions imposed by the Socom, the Scout Rangers men could face dismissal from the service should the court find them guilty of the criminal charges hurled against them.

The charges are still pending with the local court here.

Guinolbay, however, told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview that he was exerting efforts to reach out to the complainants. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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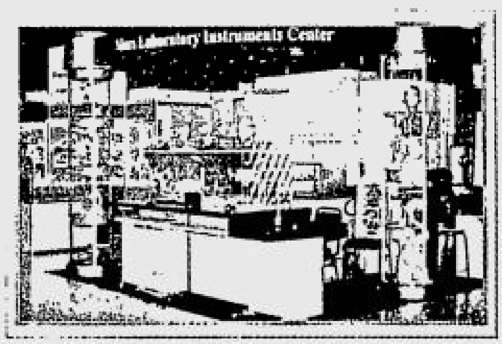

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Feb. 12 - JENINE DESIDERIO w/ Old School & D' Cardinals Dancers
Feb. 13 - ARPIE & D' MULTIVITAMINS w/ Michelle De Guzman
Feb. 16 - XSENTRIC ACOUSTIC BAND
Feb. 17 - DREAM SEQUENCE BAND
Feb. 18 - BOBBY & BUBUT GOMEZ BAND
Feb. 19 - GO GIRLS w/ D' Cardinals Dancers
Feb. 20 - PATRICIA ISMAEL & D' Ministicks
Feb. 21 - LOLITA CARBON & ASIN
Feb. 14
- TOOTSIE GUEVARRA
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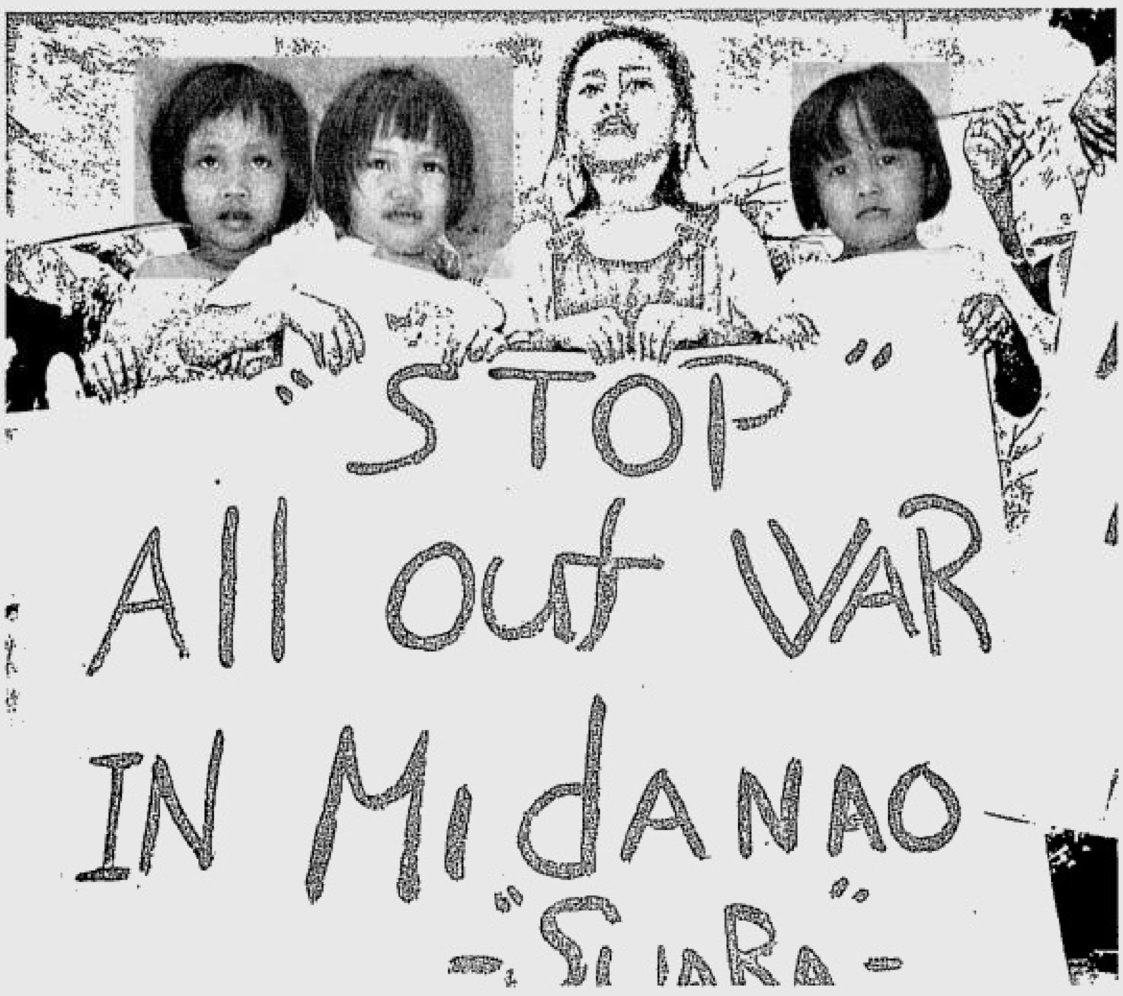


**CHILDREN'S CLAMOR**

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A letter is missing in these children's spelling of Mindanao at a rally in Davao City recently, but it doesn't diminish their desire for peace on the island, battered by decades of guerrilla warfare and military operations.

# Armed men go to Masbate for elections

**LEGAZPI CITY—Masbate police director Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo on Saturday said armed men believed to be from Metro Manila, the Visayas and Mindanao have arrived in Masbate reportedly in connection with the coming May elections.**

He made the disclosure after four unidentified gunmen in camouflage attire fired at one of the houses of Mayor Helen Bunan of San Fernando town (in Ticao Island, Masbate) on Thursday morning. No one was hurt during the attack, he said, since the house was unoccupied.

The attack happened a day after a military officer was killed and at least 11 military personnel and a civilian were wounded when New People's Army rebels ambushed them in Barangay Pagkiyawan, Uson, Masbate on Wednesday.

Mapalo said they were investigating the intelligence reports they had received.

He had also ordered the chiefs of police in the province to intensify checkpoints and gun ban operations in strategic areas to ensure peace and order throughout the election period.

Mapalo said additional forces from the Army and police have already been deployed to different parts of Masbate to reinforce the local police force. These are composed of a company of the 5th Scout Rangers, the Bravo Company of the Police Regional Mobile Group and a group of militiamen belonging to the 2nd Infantry Battalion.

Masbate is one of the election hot spots in Bicol declared by the Commission on Elections this year based on its experience during past elections.

Bunan is seeking reelection in the May 10 elections and is being challenged by Rep. Vida Espinosa.

She is the third Bicol official to be reportedly harassed by armed men, after Mayor Armando Guerrero of Gigmoto, Catanduanes and Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis.

The elections are starting to heat up and in Abra, a candidate and a bodyguard of a politician were slain. The killing was believed election-related.

Ceferino Callabag, 54, was shot dead inside a grocery in Danglas, Abra Sunday night, said Senior Supt. Artemio Hicban, Abra police chief.

Callabag was running for a seat in the municipal council.

Gregorio Castañeda, 44, bodyguard of candidate for mayor Wilmer Panabang was shot dead outside the candidate's house in the town of Penarrubia near Danglas Saturday.

The suspects in the two killings remain unidentified. *Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau with an AFP report*

# 2,000 rally in Dumaguete vs sugar smuggling

**By Carla P. Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

DUMAGUETE CITY—About 2,000 sugar planters and workers staged a rally on Sunday to protest the drop in mill gate prices of sugar.

They warned President Macapagal-Arroyo that they will register their displeasure in their ballots in the May elections if she fails to stop sugar smuggling, which they blamed for the free-fall in prices.

The protesters marched from the Capitol Lagoon Park to the Bacolod Public Plaza. Some of them carried placards calling for the resignation of Sugar Regulatory Administrator James Ledesma.

They poured sugar across San Juan Street in front of the Bacolod Public Plaza and put a wreath on top to symbolize the death of the sugar industry, which they blamed on the lack of adequate help from the Macapagal administration.

Mill gate sugar prices dropped last week to a low of P638 per 50-kilo bag (lkg) from P820 at the start of the milling season last year. But retail prices of sugar remained the same. Many sugar producers blamed the low prices on unabated sugar smuggling.

Manuel Lamata, president of the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines, said the rally was only the beginning of their protests.

"If no action is taken on our complaints, I can assure you that the next one is going to be very big ... it will be nationwide," he said.

"If the President fails to address the problem, we will definitely go against her in the May polls," Lamata said.

He said Malacañang might have thought they were not desperate. "We are desperate because these are really desperate prices. We have never encountered this kind of a problem where fertilizer is more expensive than one bag of sugar," he added.

Lamata said they met President Macapagal thrice in Malacañang and she assured them that something would be done. Still, he added, nothing happened.

"The proof of the pudding is in the price. Smuggled sugar is still coming in," he said.

Lamata reiterated that Ms Macapagal should sign an executive order raising the tariff on colored sugar from three percent to 65 percent to prevent the technical smuggling of sugar.

"She should stop smuggling on its tracks and put the smugglers in jail. That is what we want her to address immediately, not after the elections. We are sick and tired of promises," said Lamata.

He, however, said he does not support calls for Ledesma's resignation because the SRA chief does not have police powers.

Ledesma, however, said President Macapagal was very concerned and was doing everything within her power to solve the sugar crisis.

Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella said Ms Macapagal had also agreed to hold a summit of sugar industry leaders in Malacañang on Feb. 17 to discuss concerns of the industry.

# Vizcaya seeks tighter noose on plant smuggling

**By Melvin Gascon**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani on Wednesday called on lawmakers to enact a law that would curb smuggling of planting materials in the province, in an effort to protect the thriving local citrus industry.

Agbayani made the call amid growing concern over the recent discovery of the tristeza virus infection in some citrus plantations in upland Alfonso Castañeda town, some 170 km from this capitol town.

"What we need at this point is a law that would regulate the transport of planting materials and authorize our (agriculture) personnel to ban the entry of shipment of diseased plants," he said.

Earlier, Fortunato Battad, retired pomology professor and former president emeritus of the Central Luzon State University in the Science City of Muñoz in Nueva Ecija, said the presence of tristeza virus in orchards in the Casecnan area could have devastating effects on the province's citrus industry.

"If this infection is not eradicated soonest, your growing citrus industry could be wiped out in the next three to five years," Battad said during a citrus development forum here.

According to the Food and Fertilizer Technology Center website, tristeza, also known as "quick decline," is the most destructive disease of citrus that was reported to have wiped out the citrus industries in many countries. Affected trees become dwarfed and show less vigor, and then die.

Battad said the virus might have been brought into the Casecnan area due to the importation from other provinces of infected rambutan, durian and other rootstocks.

Agbayani, however, said existing quarantine laws do not cover plants, which make checkpoint personnel helpless to check the movement of planting materials to and from the province.

"The province has been free of the FMD (foot-and-mouth disease) because of our effective quarantine system that is backed up by a provincial ordinance. This has given us the authority to do whatever is necessary to prevent the spread of the disease, even to the extent of exterminating infected animals," he said.

"The owners (of seized animals) went to the courts to complain but they always lost because we had the legal basis," he said. "We could not do the same with (shipments of) planting materials, though these might already be sources of diseases..."

Officials of the California Energy-Casecnan, reported that the virus was detected on citrus orchards in three villages in the Casecnan multi-purpose irrigation and power project in Alfonso Castañeda.

# BIR agent entrapped, faces raps, jail term

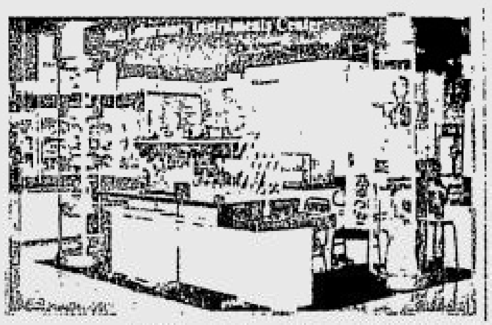
BACOLOD CITY—An examiner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue is facing charges for allegedly extorting money from a businessman in exchange for a readjustment of his tax delinquency.

Lily Aguirre Doblar, 50, of this city, will be charged on Tuesday with violation of the Anti Graft and Corrupt Practices Act before the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas.

Doblar was detained at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group headquarters at the Camp Alfredo Montelibano Sr. following her arrest on Saturday in an entrapment operation conducted on 6th Street in Bacolod.

Senior Insp. Moises Villaceran, 601st CIDG provincial field officer, said Doblar was caught in the act of accepting P13,000 in marked money from complainant Anthony Javelosa, a barangay captain of Aguisan, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental.

Doblar is an examiner assigned to the Binalbagan BIR district office that covers Negros Occidental towns and cities from Bago City to Hinobaan. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*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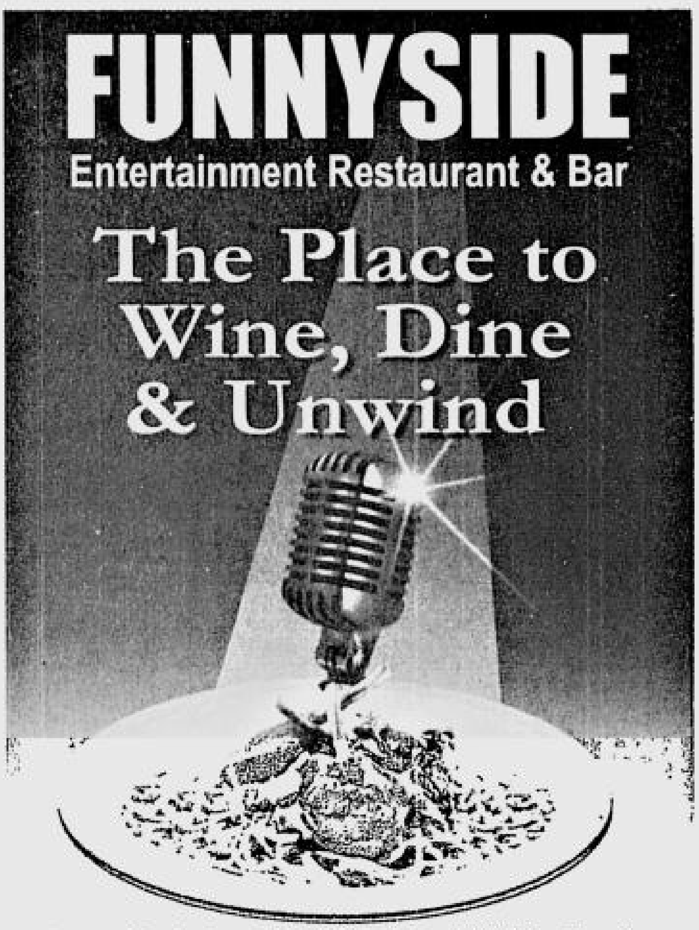
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# Hero of Basilan siege reprimanded by AFP

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Special Operations Command (Socom) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines reprimanded a Lamitan, Basilan hero and demoted to a rank lower four of his men involved in the beating of three civilians inside a police station in the evening of Oct. 26 last year here.

No less than Maj. Gen. Allan Cabalquinto, Socom chief, signed the memorandum reprimanding Army Scout Ranger Capt. Ruben Guinolbay, acknowledged hero of the June 2, 2001 Lamitan siege.

Cabalquinto also ordered the demotion of Cpl. Edwin Romero, Cpl. Romulo Sumain, Pfcs. Jesus Moret and Rodrigo Husain to a rank lower.

Guinolbay and his men were facing administrative and criminal charges for storming the Bula police station and beating up Pedro Animas IV and his two companions in front of policemen.

It turned out that Animas and his friends were not the same group who figured in a brawl with two of Guinolbay's men. Animas and his friends were just invited by the police to give oral accounts of what took place inside the bar.

The beating incident sparked public uproar, prompting the city council to declare Guinolbay persona non grata.

However, a few weeks ago, Guinolbay, accompanied by his wife, appeared before the city council to apologize and ask for the recall of a resolution declaring him an unwanted person here.

The members of the city council accepted the Army officer's apology but subjected his request to further study.

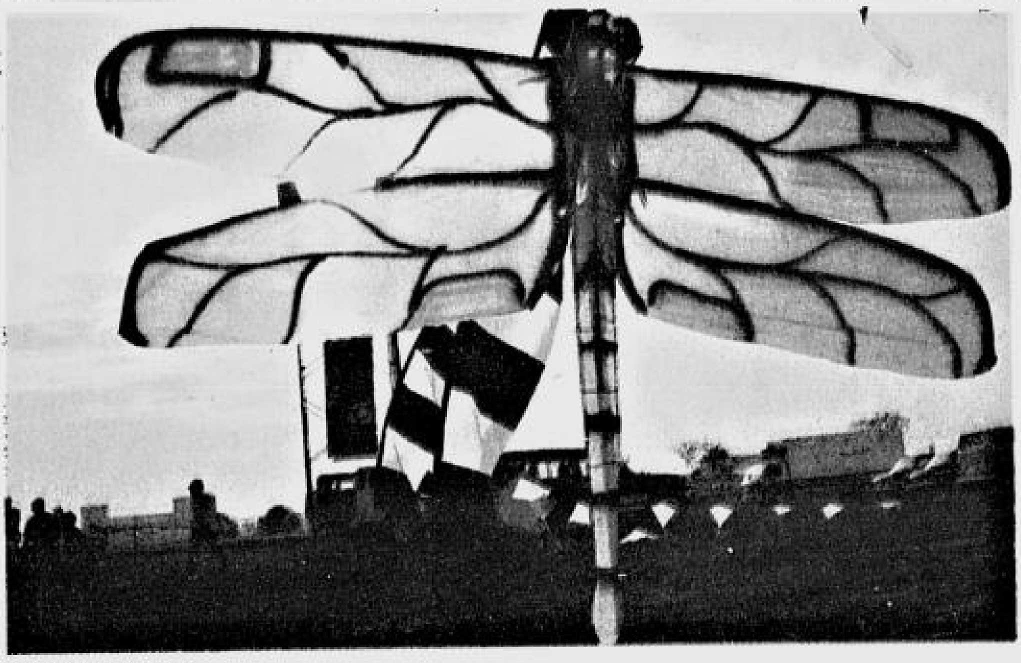
In a memorandum, the Socom chief claimed that Guinolbay and his men violated the Articles of War 97 and 105.

Because of this, they would not be eligible for promotion within one year starting from the date they received the censure and demotion order.

Apart from the sanctions imposed by the Socom, the Scout Rangers men could face dismissal from the service should the court find them guilty of the criminal charges hurled against them.

The charges are still pending with the local court here.

Guinolbay, however, told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview that he was exerting efforts to reach out to the complainants. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



**DRAGONFLY**
A kite resembling an overgrown dragonfly hangs in the booth of Kite Team Philippines Inc. during the Aerosports Festival in Clark.
ARLAN NAEG/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

# Church assails military for linking it to NPA

KIDAPAWAN CITY—The Catholic Church here cried foul over the alleged connection drawn by the military on them and the New People's Army (NPA).

Calling it "Yawan-on" (evil), Diocese of Kidapawan Bishop Romulo Valles, DD, said the attempt of the military to link them to the NPA poses a great danger to the apostolic mission of the Church.

Recently, the military based in the town of Arakan in North Cotabato said Fr. Peter Geremia and the diocese's Tribal Filipino (TF) Program is supporting the NPA.

"This is a serious accusation ... and I am afraid because this shows that the military is implementing a systematic campaign in painting (an) ugly image of the Church," Valles said.

Geremia also issued a statement saying the military is back to its "black propaganda against the Catholic Church."

But Col. Arnold Quiapo, commander of the military's 39th Infantry Battalion based in Arakan, said some lumad gave the name of Geremia and the TF program which he heads during a consultation in Arakan between the military and the lumad.

"Whatever the lumad said during the consultation was their own. We did not influence them. It was their personal experience while they were together with Fr. Geremia. We can't stop them from telling their personal experiences," Quiapo said.

Quiapo said a certain Oscar Emba mentioned about the Geremia-NPA links. He said Emba was working with Geremia from 1979 to 1987 as a community organizer.

But he said the military was not quarreling with the Church and actually wondering why it was dragged into the issue. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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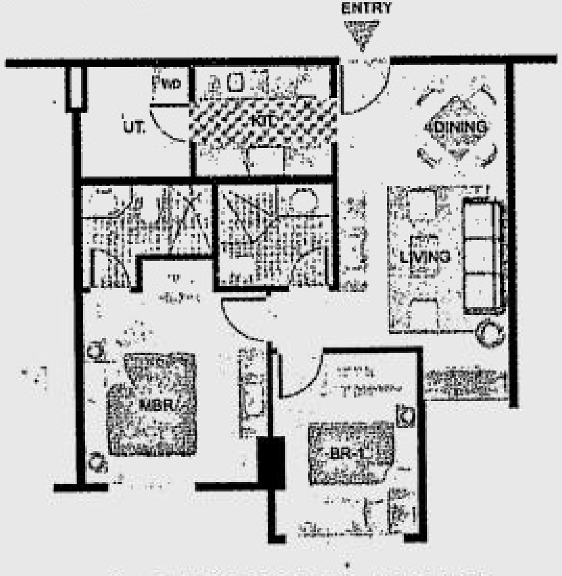

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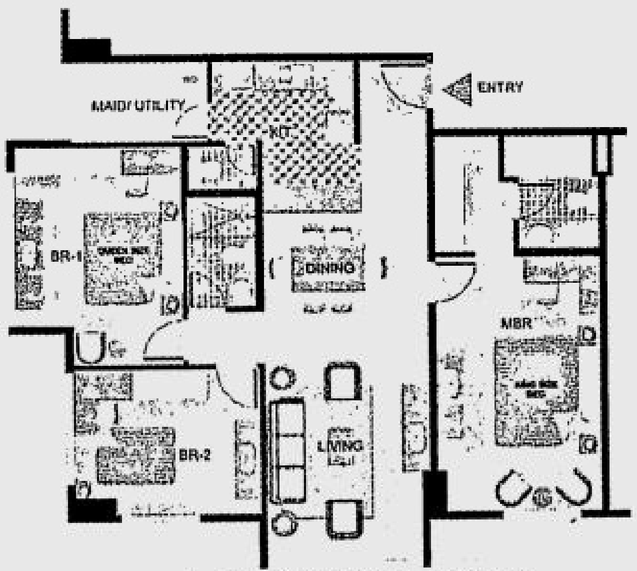

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# There they go . . .

From page A1

take photos and then file cases.

The incumbent President and two of her strongest rivals will inaugurate their campaigns with religious rites.

"We will be starting off the campaign with a Mass and the President would like to have it at the highest point of Laguna," Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson, Michael Defensor, said.

The campaign kicks off in Cavinti, Laguna. Ms Macapagal will be joined by her running mate Sen. Noli de Castro and 12 senatorial candidates.

Former Sen. Raul Roco starts his campaign with an 8 a.m. Mass in Villa San Miguel, officiated by the influential Jaime Cardinal Sin.

"At the request of the cardinal and in consideration of his health, the media will not be allowed inside Villa San Miguel but they may wait outside the compound," read a media advisory issued by the Alyansa ng Pag-Asa media bureau yesterday.

Opposition coalition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. starts off even earlier, with a 7 a.m. Mass at the San Beda College in Manila, where he spent his grade school years. Poe will be joined by his running mate, Sen. Loren Legarda, and senatorial candidates under the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

Opposition candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson, however, will get straight to the point: a thousand-vehicle motorcade from Pasay City to Imus, Cavite.

Lacson spokesperson Lito Banayo said that as of late yesterday afternoon, the campaign schedule did not include a Mass.

"Such activities are considered private by the senator. He may go to Mass but he doesn't believe in making this public," Banayo told the INQUIRER.

## Ms Macapagal

Press Secretary Milton Alingod explained why Ms Macapagal was starting in Cavinti.

"We're starting from a position of strength where you have a clear view of things," Alingod said. He said the original choice was Baguio City, but Ms Macapagal was already scheduled to go there on Feb. 14 for the Philippine Military Academy's alumni homecoming.

But Defensor said Laguna was chosen also because of its strategic impact. "We are strengthening our foothold in mega-Manila and Laguna is one of the major provinces within the area of mega Manila," he said.

OFW AT PAMILYA
IBASURA GLORIA
JUNK
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MIGRANTE
PRO-GLORIA

**PRO AND ANTI.** Members of Migrante, an organization of overseas Filipino workers and their families, call for the junking of President Macapagal during a rally in Mendiola (left photo). At the University of the Philippines' campus in Diliman, Quezon City, members of Pro-Gloria, a multisectoral group, sign a covenant to actively campaign for the President. JESS YUSON/JOAN BONDOC

From Cavinti, Ms Macapagal and her team will motor to seven other Laguna towns for meetings, caucuses with local leaders and rallies.

A caucus with local leaders will be held in Los Baños at around lunchtime, followed by another rally in Calamba City at around 4 p.m.

The motorcade will pass through Sta. Rosa and Cabuyao towns before an 8 p.m. rally in San Pedro.

About 5,000 barangay officials and leaders from Laguna trooped to Malacañang yesterday, allegedly upon the President's invitation. Around 20 buses were seen lining up along JP Laurel Street, outside the Palace, carrying the Laguna folk.

They were treated to breakfast, some of them to lunch, and were given the yellow "Gloria" caps and T-shirts.

The Laguna group was the latest batch bused to Malacañang from different parts of the country.

## Lacson

A motorcade, made up of at least a thousand vehicles from transport groups supporting Lacson, will escort the candidate to Cavite for the province's sendoff for its "favorite son" in his campaign to become the second Caviteño President.

The caravan, which starts at 7:30 a.m. from the President Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City, will pass through several towns of Cavite before winding up at the Imus town plaza, where Lacson's province mates and supporters will be gathered.

"We are going to give Cavite to Senator Lacson. He will have over 100,000 votes (more) than whoever among the other presidential candidates is going to place second in the province," Vice Gov. Juanito Victor Remulla told the INQUIRER.

"Caviteños value loyalty and we would all be behind Senator Lacson all the way," he added.

Remulla's declaration of "vehement" support for Lacson is backed by probably the most influential clan in Cavite, which supported Joseph Estrada in 1998 and Speaker Ramon Mitra in 1992.

"(Lacson) and my father (former Gov. Juanito Remulla) share the same values and principles of governance. If one first takes care of peace and order and implements the law, everything else will follow," Remulla said.

With the support of Cavite's leaders in 1992, Mitra topped the presidential race in Cavite, even as he landed fourth nationwide.

"Cavite will also be there to rally behind Senator Lacson in his campaign. We would help in the campaign outside Cavite as my brother goes to places the senator would not be able to visit because of the tight schedule," Remulla said, referring to Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, a key Lacson supporter in the House of Representatives.

## Poe

After the Mass at San Beda, Poe launches his campaign with a "grand rally" at 9 a.m. at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

Rodolfo Reyes, media bureau chief of Poe's campaign, said the original plan was to hold the first day of the campaign in the actor's hometown of San Carlos City in Pangasinan. But the plan was changed and now they will hold it in Manila instead.

"It will be quite a show," Reyes told the INQUIRER, noting that the KNP's supporters, including Poe's colleagues in show business, would be there to support the popular movie actor.

Reyes said the opposition presidential candidate was likely to announce his program of government at the proclamation rally.

Video screens will be provided outside the Cuneta Astrodome, which can only accommodate a crowd of 10,000.

Reyes said Poe's first out-of-town trip would be in the northern and Central Luzon areas. Poe will lead a motorcade to Bulacan on Wednesday, and will head to Pampanga on Thursday. He will go to Zambales and Bataan on Friday.

The weekends will see the KNP standard-bearer and fellow candidates heading to Tarlac on Saturday and Pangasinan on Sunday.

Poe's activities will be a departure from the traditional campaigns of the past, said Sen. Edgardo Angara.

Angara said more motorcades and whistle-stop campaigns will be mounted, rather than rallies in the next three months. "We want to reach out to more people and we want to get to as many places as possible," he said in a phone interview.

In essence, Poe will be "barnstorming" the countryside. This will mean more areas covered and more exposure for Poe, Angara said. "It's going to be a fast-moving campaign."

## Roco

After the Mass at Villa San Miguel, which the Roco campaign has dubbed "Alay sa Diyos (Offering to God)," the candidate and his running mate Herminio Aquino will visit four points in Metro Manila, and then end with a 6 p.m. prayer vigil at the Quezon Memorial Circle dubbed "Alay sa Bayan (Offering to the Nation)."

Roco, Aquino and their senatorial slate will meet with children at the Jose Rizal University in Mandaluyong City, then proceed to Nueve de Pebrero, also in Mandaluyong, for a tour of the public market at 10 a.m.

An hour and a half later, they will break bread with Roco's "Youth Army" at the SM Megamall Food Court, then meet with the urban poor representatives at DM Compound, Heroes Del 96, Barangay 73 in Caloocan City.

The slate wanted to conduct its kick-off rally today in Bicol—Roco's home region which supported him solidly in his 1998 run—but the lack of commercial flights forced organizers to push this to tomorrow.

Tomorrow, the campaign heads outside Metro Manila. First stop is Naga City, for a string of activities, such as a Mass at the historic Naga Cathedral and campus hopping before going to Pili, Camarines Sur, for a public market tour.

The candidates will return to Naga for a medical mission, a market visit and the much-awaited march to Plaza Quezon for a "grand rally." A "Concert of Hope" will follow.

On Thursday, the group will proceed to Legazpi City for a motorcade and media briefing, then attend two political rallies in Tabaco, Albay.

To woo the Visayan vote, the ticket is slated to go to Cebu province on Friday and Saturday. *With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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# Coming soon on TV: Battle of campaign ads

From page A1

seriously her strategists are taking the battle of the TV ads among the presidential candidates.

Over at the Poe camp, Manuel Urbano Jr., popularly known as Mr. Shooli of TV's "Mongolian Barbecue," is directing the campaign ads of not only the actor but also of his running mate, Sen. Loren Legarda.

Asked on Saturday to comment on the experience, Urbano said: *"Masaya ako siyempre* (I'm happy, of course). I have a big responsibility. I'm not working with just anybody. Loren and FPJ *ito."*

## Equitable sharing

Ms Macapagal trail Poe in the Social Weather Stations' January survey on presidential choices: 27 percent to his 36 percent.

Nevertheless, Malacañang has declared the government-run media outfits open to all candidates, including those from the opposition, her spokesperson Ignacio Bunye announced yesterday.

"The general principle is equitable sharing of time or equal access to media outlets," Bunye said.

But he said the President was appealing to all candidates "to take the high road of civility, prudence and decency in the campaign period."

"We would like the candidates to emphasize their programs and platforms that will improve our lives, instead of the alleged character flaws of some candidates," Bunye added.

## Mother and daughter

Press Secretary Milton Alingod said the first in the series of the President's TV ads were shot Saturday.

Alingod said the commercial, to be aired starting today, would have Ms Macapagal and her only daughter Luli engaged in an intimate talk.

"The President is telling her daughter about her hopes and aspirations, her goals, and her determination to carry on and to bring these goals to fruition," he said.

**PRESIDENTIAL** aspirant Fernando Poe Jr. talks with children as his running mate, Sen. Loren Legarda, prepares for a taping of their campaign commercial in Quezon City. CYNTHIA D. BALANA

Bunye said he saw nothing wrong with the hiring of a US consultant so long as the candidates can afford it and they comply with the time limit set on TV ads by the Commission on Elections.

## Side by side

Poe's 30-second side-by-side ads, "Palengke" and "Basketball," will likewise make their TV debut today. Both were produced by the actor's own FPJ Productions and TAPE Exponent of his campaign spokesperson, Sen. Vicente Sotto III.

Poe also appears in Legarda's commercial, "May Bagong Umaga," to be shown starting Feb. 15 with the theme song performed by Mike Villegas, a winner of the Metropop competition.

"Basketball" is about the value of unity and teamwork, and "Palengke," about giving the people respite from politics and the crises brought about by economic difficulties.

"May Bagong Umaga" shows Poe and Legarda telling children and their parents that a brighter future lies ahead if the children are honest and their parents hardworking.

"I'm happy with the concept because it's not like most of the political advertisements that you see," Urbano said.

## Patience

The INQUIRER was invited to the Saturday taping of "May Bagong Umaga" at the Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City.

Justifying the five takes in Scene 13, Urbano said in Filipino: "FPJ is fond of children. He is very patient with them."

Scene 13 shows Poe sitting in a garden with children milling around him. Per the script, a 3-year-old kisses him gleefully after he says: *"Para sa ating mga anak, sama-sama, tulong-tulong sa pagpapanday ng bagong umaga* (For our children, all together, helping one another to forge a new morning)."

Reviewing the takes, Poe noted that the child appeared self-conscious and was looking at the ice cream.

Urbano said it was expected of children not to pay attention during shooting "because they are children."

He also expressed confidence that the ads would draw the votes away from Poe and Legarda's rivals in the May elections.

Asked if he would vote for his clients, Urbano said: "It's a job. I know my preferences. They are all friends of mine, and my conscience will make me vote for whoever I think should be voted [into office]."

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# Noli, Loren shelve . . .

From page A1

Castro and his wife spanned 20 years, and that she also "took care" of Katherine when the young girl was growing up.

"That's the kind of friendship we have; nothing can break that," she stressed.

And to show that "something higher than politics" bound the people he had invited to the wedding, De Castro said he and his wife decided to have Loren as one of the godmothers "right after the two of us announced our candidacies."

De Castro's wife, Arlene Sinsuat, is a former vice president for current affairs of ABS-CBN.

## Late GMA

Legarda, however, did not stay long enough to share the feast with De Castro's most important guest.

Ms Macapagal arrived at 9:45 p.m., some 30 minutes after Legarda had left. She was ushered to a table that was hurriedly cleared of used china and flatware, and immediately served a glass of red wine.

She was joined at the table by De Castro and the other principal sponsors, administration Senators Joker Arroyo, Manuel Villar, Francis Pangilinan and Ralph Recto, Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, and ABS-CBN top executives Eugenio Lopez III and Federico Garcia.

In brief remarks, the President told the newlyweds that "love is an act of the will," and advised them to "trust God."

She left an hour later, choosing to ride in a back-up Ford Expedition rather than in the Mercedes Benz with the No. 1 license plate, as though to warm up to what could be her main transport in the campaign season.

The 6 p.m. wedding and the 550-guest reception displayed the pomp and pageantry befitting powerful guests.

A 1933 Lincoln V12 limousine served as the bridal car. A 5-minute fireworks display lit up the sky over Tandang Sora as the newlyweds stepped out of the chapel.

The other female principal sponsors included Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, Batangas Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto, ABS-CBN executive Charo Santos-Concio and anchor Korina Sanchez.

Gina de Venecia, who came with her husband, Speaker Jose de Venecia, served as proxy for Senator Pangilinan's actress wife, Sharon Cuneta.

Also present were Senate President Franklin Drilon, K-4 senatorial candidate Pia Cayetano and her brother, Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano.

ABS-CBN talents led by TV host Boy Abunda provided the entertainment during the reception.

The wedding entourage included some of Katherine's fellow reporters in the Lopez-owned network.

## First baby

The newlyweds are said to be expecting their firstborn in July.

"Kat and I have talked about raising a family a long time ago," Eric Cruz, a researcher for the weekly investigative program "Magandang Gabi Bayan," told the INQUIRER a day after the wedding. "We're both emotionally prepared. I'm used to having kids around. There are many kids in Kat's house."

Cruz said he and Katherine were awaiting the completion of their new house on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, and would move there sometime in March or April.

They are set to go on a honeymoon in Las Vegas late this month.

But Katherine is also expected to replace her father as host of "Magandang Gabi, Bayan" when the campaign period begins. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Marinel R. Cruz*

**LOVEBIRDS** imported from Europe are put to death in the Philippines after they passed through bird flu-infected Thailand.

ROGER MARGALLO

# 353 imported lovebirds put to sleep, burned

From page A1

weeks. So far, it hasn't showed up in the Philippines, and the government has banned poultry imports from infected countries. *(See related story in The World, Page A8.)*

Davinio Catbagan, head of the airport animal quarantine office, said 353 lovebirds imported from the Netherlands were placed in plastic bags and put to sleep using carbon monoxide before they were burned by personnel wearing protective gloves and masks.

The birds had been in quarantine since they arrived in Manila last Wednesday on a Kuwait Airways flight.

## No permits

Although the birds never left the aircraft in the Thai capital of Bangkok, the plane was opened to load cargo so they could have been infected, Catbagan said.

He also said the importer had failed to secure the required permit for the birds.

"That is really the procedure. If they pass by an Asian country with bird flu even just for a stopover, we do not release (them)," said Librada Tolentino, another quarantine officer.

Avian influenza has killed 19 people in Vietnam and Thailand. More than 50 million chickens have been slaughtered in Asia to stem the spread of the virus.

## Delaware outbreak

Also Monday, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the government had banned poultry imports from the US state of Delaware after officials there confirmed a different strain of bird flu outbreak.

Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima said there was no need to freeze imports of US poultry, noting that only those from Delaware would be barred.

Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia have suspended US poultry imports since bird flu was discovered in Delaware on Saturday.

"We're waiting for further reports on this, but in the meantime I don't think there's a reason to worry because we don't actually import anything out of Delaware," Purisima said.

According to him, the bulk of the country's chicken imports from the United States come from the US West Coast and Arkansas. The country also imports chicken from Canada and Australia.

Purisima said "negotiations are ongoing with regard to quantities, prices and quarantine rules" for the entry of Philippine chicken into Japan, which is scrambling for supplies following bird flu outbreaks in Japan's major suppliers. China and South Korea are the other two biggest poultry buyers in Asia.

"We actually have more supply of chicken than demand. In fact, one of the things we are looking at is possible export to other countries, particularly Japan," he told reporters.

Rita Imelda Palabyab, president of the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators, said she was confident the Philippines would be able to make some sales to Japan.

"For sure, we will be able to sell some poultry to Japan," Palabyab told Reuters. "We have a lot of inquiries from Japan, but actual sales have not yet materialized."

## Bird flu in Japan

Japan has already banned imports from Thailand and China after bird flu was reported in the two countries. Japan has itself reported an outbreak of bird flu, leading to the slaughter of about 35,000 chickens.

About 20 percent of the chickens that Japan needs have to be sourced elsewhere following Tokyo's ban on chickens from the United States, Japan's fourth-largest supplier.

"Apart from Japan, we are also getting inquiries from Vietnam," Palabyab said. "I am not sure if we will be able to sell to some other nations—maybe South Korea. We should be able to finalize some sales in a couple of weeks."

The Philippines produces about 500 million kg of poultry meat a year, most of it to meet domestic demand.

The country exported less than 100 tons of poultry last year, with only minimal amounts sold to Japan.

Palabyab said the Philippines was taking strict measures to keep the country free of bird flu. "As a country, we are just very lucky because if it is brought by migratory birds, it is something we cannot fully prevent."

## Tight measures

"As far as our broiler industry is concerned, we have been implementing very tight measures. All of our facilities are closed to visitors," she said.

A sharp drop in domestic demand for poultry meat because of the bird flu outbreaks elsewhere had left the local poultry trade with excess supply, forcing traders to look for opportunity overseas, Palabyab said.

She said good sales last December had encouraged poultry producers to increase their flocks.

"Right now, we can serve all that is asked of us," she said. "Right now, the domestic market is pretty weak. All the news of avian flu, although it is in other countries, has already scared many of our consumers."

This has led to a sharp drop in domestic chicken prices. Live birds are being sold in the domestic market at about P40 per kg, down from about P62 per kg in early January. Prices of processed chicken are also down by about 40 percent. *Reports from AP, AFP, Reuters*

# Defensor ...

From page A1

Castro (who denied the report) and we see this as a desperate move of people who have realized that they cannot reverse a Noli de Castro landslide," Defensor said in a phone interview.

Asked if he was referring to the camp of Sen. Loren Legarda, De Castro's friend and principal rival, Defensor said "*Mukhang ganun* (It appears that way)." But he stressed that this was unconfirmed.

## Benefit

But Roco, Alyansa ng Pag-asa's standard-bearer, accused the camp of Ms Macapagal of spreading the rumor.

"They're the ones behind it. The net effect of that message is that Roco will slide down. Who's going to benefit from it but them?" Roco said in a phone interview, noting that people "moving around in Mindanao" were identified with Ms Macapagal's camp.

Roco said he had no interest in the vice presidency. "Besides, it's bad for my candidacy," he said.

De Castro said he would not withdraw from the vice presidential race to give way to anybody.

"No, no, no. I'm not withdrawing. That would be political suicide for me. If I am going to withdraw, I should have stuck to my decision not to run," he said, recalling his earlier difficulty in deciding whether to run for president or vice president.

"There's no stopping my candidacy," De Castro said in a phone interview. He noted that he was even credited for Ms Macapagal's climb to the No. 2 spot in the latest survey of Social Weather Stations.

De Castro said the rumor of his withdrawal was circulating in Davao and Bacolod cities and that some radio stations there called him up about it. But he said he was also told that the rumor came from Manila.

"Obviously, someone was spreading it, ... someone not supporting me," he said.

Asked if he suspected Legarda's camp, he said: "It's hard to be suspicious."

Former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez-Tan, Roco's campaign adviser, claimed that Ms Macapagal's camp was spreading the rumor as "part of a psychological warfare to sow confusion in our ranks."

"Roco sliding down is totally out of the question. We're not quitting; we're running. In fact, we're in a far better position now than we were in 1998," Galvez-Tan said, referring to the 1998 presidential election in which Roco lost to actor Joseph Estrada.

Galvez-Tan said "Roco remains solid. He's running and continuing the fight."

The reports against De Castro may have been prompted by Malacañang's efforts to woo Roco out of the presidential race.

After two political analysts suggested in an INQUIRER report that Ms Macapagal could beat opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. if she could get Roco out of the way, Malacañang expressed openness to the idea.

Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said that nothing was impossible and that she was open to any arrangement that would ensure her continuity in office. Roco, however, strongly turned down the proposal.

## Negotiation

Earlier, the Liberal Party, which belongs to the administration K-4 coalition, revealed that its chair, Senate President Franklin Drilon, and president, Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, had been negotiating Roco's withdrawal from the presidential race in favor of Ms Macapagal.

Asked if replacing De Castro with Roco was still possible, Defensor said: "I don't even think the (former) senator will accept that."

"That is still very far from the discussions," he said. Defensor, an LP member, said what his party was brokering was how to achieve unity without touching on any specific position for Roco.

"I cannot speak for the President or Senator De Castro, but the first step is (pursuing) unity to bring about good governance, saving the economy and (following) the principles of Edsa Dos. That should be the basis of any unity talks (with Roco)," Defensor said.

As for Malacañang's being open to negotiating Roco's withdrawal from the race, De Castro said: "It is for Roco to withdraw, not for Roco to slide down to be GMA's running mate."

He said Ms Macapagal did not mention anything about Roco replacing him. He said he had a long talk with Ms Macapagal during the wedding of his daughter Katherine on Sunday.

Asked if he would support Roco's joining the President's team, he said: "That's another story."

# Compensation bill may benefit Marcos

From page A1

of Representatives last week may give rise to just such a history-defying interpretation.

Lawyer Rod Domingo of Claimants 1081, a group of martial law victims, said the final version of House Bill No. 4535 "opened the floodgates" to all sorts of claims, including that by Marcos, his family and his cronies.

"We'll have a very funny situation if we follow that law," he said.

The bill that was passed Feb. 4, two days before Congress adjourned, earmarked P8 billion out of the $684 million in Marcos' Swiss deposits forfeited in favor of the government to compensate human rights victims during the Marcos regime.

It sought to indemnify victims of gross human rights violations from Jan. 1, 1969 to Feb. 25, 1986, the period between the last year of Marcos' last term in office and his ouster in the Edsa I revolt.

Like the martial law victims' group Selda, Domingo railed against the bill's expansion of recognized human rights abuses. Lawmakers had allowed victims of "involuntary exile" during that period to make a claim.

"Now isn't Imelda (Marcos) claiming they were also victims of human rights abuse because they were forced out and made to live in exile (in Hawaii at the end of the Edsa revolt?) So under that bill even the Marcoses can file a claim. In fact, all his cronies like (the late Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fabian) Ver who were exiled can make a claim," Domingo said.

The original bill recognized only victims of torture, arbitrary detention, summary execution and involuntary disappearance during the Marcos regime.

But lawmakers later included exile, illegal takeover of business, saturation drives (or "*sona*"), abducting children of rebels, and sexual offenses against detainees in the list of abuses.

Domingo would have wanted the list of claimants to be limited to the 9,539 victims of torture, summary execution and involuntary disappearance who won a $2-billion class-suit against Marcos in a Hawaii court.

"I won't be surprised if half a million people file their claims under the bill. It will take a lifetime before (the proposed Board of Compensation) finishes evaluating and verifying those claims," Domingo said.

"They opened the floodgates to fraudulent claims," he lamented.

Under the approved bill, the five-man Board of Compensation has to investigate all the applications first before it determines the amount of compensation and begins the actual distribution.

Domingo agreed with Selda secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez's observation that the bill has been "mangled."

"That's far from being a perfect bill. It has been mangled," he said.

Domingo said he hoped that the counterpart Senate Bill No. 1877 would be better, and that the flaws in the House bill would be "corrected" in the bicameral conference.

The Senate failed to pass the bill last week. Domingo said he was hoping the Senate would be able to do so during the brief session after the May 10 elections and before the start of the next Congress.

# CPP rival says peace negotiations to collapse

From page A1

dent] wants the peace agreement as a brownie point for her reelection bid. But the agenda need serious discussion from both parties," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview.

## Politicking

In the House of Representatives, two legislators asked Malacañang to insulate the peace talks from politicking in order to achieve lasting peace.

Muntinlupa Rep. Rodolfo Biazon and Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales cautioned Ms Macapagal against using the peace talks to boost her chances in the presidential election.

Rosales said there was no need to rush the peace talks in order to forge an agreement during the campaign period.

"Whether or not the government panel and the National Democratic Front sign the peace accord by May 10, peace negotiations should be pursued," Biazon said.

Rosales said it was expected that Malacañang would use the resumption of the talks to earn brownie points for Ms Macapagal on the campaign trail.

"Definitely, they want it to be signed during the elections and they're going to use this. With GMA (Ms Macapagal) around, it's impossible that they will not use this," Rosales said.

Ms Macapagal downplayed reports that she was trying to rush the signing of a peace agreement to boost her candidacy.

"The time frame for a peace agreement is not as important as the need for it to be durable and meaningful to the lives of ordinary Filipinos," the President said in a statement.

Asked if the President thought it was feasible to sign a final peace settlement before the elections, her spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said: "Everybody's hopeful that substantial progress will be made during the days that they hold the negotiations. Let's just monitor the developments in Oslo. Let's pray for the negotiations."

## Agrarian reform

Rosales said there were still many thorny issues in the peace talks that need to be resolved, including agrarian reform and how the two panels intended to pursue it.

She mentioned the recent violent dispersal of farmers, who were protesting Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan's decision to take back the land entitlements of farmers in Davao del Norte and return them to Antonio Florendo.

Rosales said the land parcels were awarded to the farmers under the government's agrarian reform program. The decision was sustained by Pagdanganan's predecessors, Horacio Morales and Hernani Braganza.

"Both the government and the NDF panels should address this case. They should make serious work. Are they interested in distributing lands?" she asked. "How can the government be sincere in terms of agrarian reform when Pagdanganan is doing this to our farmers?"

In the case of the NDF, Rosales said the group, which claims to be pro-poor and pro-farmer, should explain the recent killing of peasants belonging to Akbayan.

## Substantial reforms

Ramirez of PMP said a final agreement could only be brokered if the government agrees to pursue substantial social, political and economic reforms.

"If that were really possible then it should have been reflected in the electoral platform of GMA. Yet the platform of K-4 offers only band-aid solutions to the problems of poverty and underdevelopment," Ramirez said.

He said: "As they have done for more than a decade, the NDF and Joma Sison will merely utilize the negotiations as a venue to propagate its cause and expose the government."

Ramirez scoffed at the communist insurgents for "not wavering from the Maoist schema that the revolution will end in victory of the protracted war.

"In their instrumentalist view, the peace talks, even parliamentary struggle, serve but do not substitute for the guerilla war as a strategy."

He predicted that at some point in the peace talks, the NDF would turn hard-line and pick on any of the issues like the permit-to-campaign fees or the terrorist tag on the CPP to scuttle the negotiations.

"Something which the government will even welcome for as long as it is Joma Sison and not Ms Macapagal who is projected in the public as a stubborn enemy of peace," the PMP leader said.

As the NDF and the government prepared for peace talks in Norway, three communist rebels were killed, officials said.

A rebel was killed and another captured in an hour-long gun battle near Baganga town in the Davao region on Sunday, while two gunmen were killed near the town of San Luis in the Agusan region.

The 35-year communist insurgency has claimed thousands of lives. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and AFP*

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ROW ON KATIPUNAN TREES

# Shut up, BF tells environment group

By Margaux Ortiz

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday only had harsh words for members of an environment group who had accused him of indiscriminately cutting trees on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City.

"*Tumigil na sila* (They should just shut up)," Fernando said in a phone interview, when asked about his reaction to the charges the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (Cocap) would file against him for the alleged cutting of trees on Katipunan.

"These groups should just leave the improvement of Katipunan to the government," Fernando said. "We know what we are doing."

Fernando said the MMDA is now prohibiting private groups from planting trees in public areas and roads.

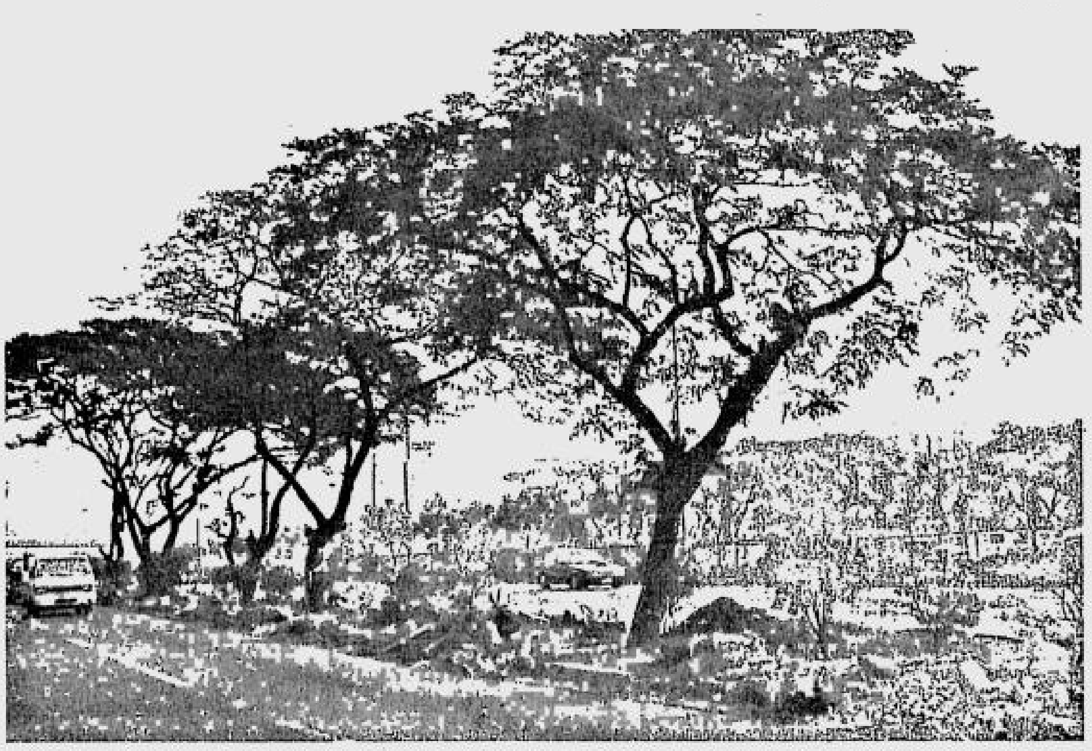
He said the private groups could lay claim to the trees and plants and "refuse to let anybody—even the government—touch these in the future for development purposes."

"Just leave the planting to the government," Fernando stressed, adding that the roads are for mobility and not for anything else.

"The MMDA will have the final say if plants will be allowed on the roads," he said. "We have to remember that our number one consideration is the safety of motorists and pedestrians."

Fernando added that the Neem trees from Katipunan which "disappeared" during the construction of U-turn slots were actually balled and transferred to Edsa's center island.

Fernando reiterated that although he has made sure that "no trees were sacrificed for the (road) scheme," MMDA personnel who are found to have harmed some trees would be immediately suspended and subjected to administrative action.



**ACACIA trees stand as mute witnesses to a battle between environment groups and the MMDA on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City.**

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

# Comelec drive may fail to go places

By Tarra Quismundo

EASIER said than done.

Election officers in Manila want to prosecute violators of campaign rules but do not have the means to do it, according to Narciso Arabe of the Commission on Elections District 5 office covering Ermita, Intramuros and Malate.

Local Comelec officials are tasked to check the compliance of local and national candidates with campaign regulations, particularly in putting up campaign posters.

But much as they want to enforce the law, Arabe said they lacked the mobility.

"We have enough manpower, but all of the six district offices have no vehicles," he said.

"We might just take the jeep or walk," Arabe added.

Task Force Baklas of Manila's Comelec, which has the job of removing misplaced posters, is composed of local Comelec officials, police station commanders and personnel of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

They have the daunting task of keeping watch over more than 80 common poster areas in the city. These include plazas, mini parks, basketball courts, public markets, barangay halls and vacant lots.

Private buildings could also be used as poster areas, as long as the owners allow candidates to do so, according to District 6 (Sta. Mesa and Sta. Ana) election officer Francisco Rosal.

The task force would also be monitoring, cleaning and clearing areas not designated by the Comelec, but will fall victim to candidates seeking support through posters and banners.

## METROBRIEFS

### Widow dies in fire

WIDOW Lucia Uy, 60, yesterday was killed in a fire in Binondo, Manila. The body of the widow was found on the second floor of the gutted five-story Cy Khe building at the corner of San Fernando and P. Campa Streets. The fire reached the fifth alarm at 3:57 a.m. before it was put out at 5:42 a.m., according to FO3 Jojo Magallanes. Arson investigators pegged property damage at P8 million. *Leila Salaverria*

### Stabbed to death

ARNEL de Leon, 33, on Sunday morning was walking on 10th Avenue in Caloocan City, when a man identified only as RapRap dela Cruz, came up to de Leon and stabbed him to death, police said. At around 1:30 a.m., jeepney driver Abraham Blasa, 29, got into an argument with barker Jerry Quizon in Valenzuela City. Quizon allegedly lost his temper and planted a knife in Blasa's chest, police said. Blasa survived the attack and was taken to the Our Lady of Fatima Hospital. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

### Hope for troubled couples

MARRIED couples who need healing in their relationship can seek help from a Retrouvaille weekend scheduled on Feb. 13 up to Feb. 15 at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Barangay San Jose (near the San Pablo Seminary), Tagaytay City. Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery) is a program designed to help heal and renew stressed, troubled and hurting marriages. The program consists of a three-day weekend starting Friday evening and ending on Sunday afternoon, and six follow-up Saturday afternoon sessions in Metro Manila. For information, please call Fr. David Clay at 523-3361 or cellphone (0918) 902-0511; Tom and Ruby at 931-8413 and 932-3750 or cellphone (0918) 923-2973; and Tessie at cellphone (0917) 538-8970.

### Lourdes homecoming

THE LOURDES School of Quezon City Alumni Association invites all alumni to its grand homecoming on Feb. 21, 4 p.m., at the LSQC High School Grounds on Apo Street in Quezon City. The festivity, dubbed "Staying Alive!," also marks the school's 49th Foundation Year. For more information, please contact Abbey of the LSQCAA office at 781-6475 or (0919) 609-4628, or e-mail: lsqcaa@edsamail.com.ph.

# Pasay City gets reprieve from garbage

PASAY City's garbage haulers agreed to collect the city's trash on Sunday out of "goodwill" even as new bidding was conducted that would give them a new contract.

"*Pinaki-usapan ko lang yung* contractors to clean up the city and collect the garbage (I asked the contractors to collect garbage and clean up the city)," said Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad.

"I just could not leave it as it was. I had to do something," he added. "*Pumayag naman sila* (They agreed)."

The city's four contractors stopped collecting garbage from Pasay's 201 barangays on Wednesday, saying they could not continue with their services without a contract.

Trinidad said he had been seeking authority from city legislators to sign a new multimillion-peso contract since December 2003 but they had refused to give it to him.

The city council held an emergency session Friday and decided on extending the contract of the garbage collectors from 60 to 90 days.

Trinidad said the terms of the resolution agreed by the council was not acceptable to the contractors.

The mayor said he had asked the bidding and awards committee for a negotiated bidding yesterday for the council's approval.

The INQUIRER tried to get the results of the bidding but the mayor said he was not privy to it. *Joyce Abaño*

# Bloody fiesta in Caloocan

CARLOS and Helen Enriquez on Sunday were attacked and wounded allegedly by a pair of drunken men in Caloocan City. When PO2 Armando Garcia responded to the wounded couple's call for help, he shot and wounded the suspects, as well as a man in the next house.

As residents of Bagong Barrio were celebrating their fiesta, two men, both carrying samurai swords, broke into the Enriquez residence and attacked the couple at around 5:30 p.m., police reported yesterday.

PO2 Garcia, a resident of Bagong Barrio, tried to stop Rolando Mendoza, 37, and his brother Emmanuel, 33, said PO1 Enrique Trinidad.

When Garcia opened fire, he hit both suspects in their bellies. The lawman also hit Don Marlon Laxamana, 24, who was in the next house. Laxamana was hit in the thigh, police said.

The Enriquez couple and Laxamana are now being treated at the Manila Central University Hospital, police said. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

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# Lucio Co has P190 million in unpaid taxes on liquor

**ON TARGET**

*Ramon Tulfo*

BUSINESS tycoon Lucio Co, allegedly behind the smuggling out of the Batangas Port of several vans loaded with dressed chicken, should be investigated once again.

My sources at the Bureau of Customs say Co has at least three million bottles of Alfonso I Solera brandy imported from Spain stashed away at his warehouse inside Clark.

Co, say my sources, paid only a minimal amount for the brandy, depriving the government of at least P160 million in taxes and duties.

The fortyish Chinese businessman brought in the imported brandy, according to records at the Customs bureau, a total of 195 containers full of the Spanish brandy.

From July to December, 2003, Co brought 117 containers in 20-foot vans and 78 containers in 40-foot vans.

Here's the breakdown, according to Customs insiders: July, three 40-foot container vans, 27 in 20-foot container vans; August, 10 in 40-foot vans; September, 20 in 40-foot containers; October, 10 in 40s, and 30 in 20s; November, 35 in 40s and 50 in 20s; December, 10 in 20-foot container vans.

How much did the former crony of deposed President Erap pay for those shipments? Only P27,300,000, my spies say.

And how much was Lucio Co supposed to have paid for those shipments? P190,000,0000!

The excise tax on imported liquor is very high. For example, the excise tax on a 20-foot container van loaded with liquor should be P700,000, and P1.4 million on a 40-foot van.

But Co, the sources say, only paid a flat rate of P100,000 for each container.

If true taxes and duties were to be imposed, Co would have been charged P190,000,000.

The government keeps on complaining about lack of collection. It's high time it went after corrupt Customs officials and employees who connive with smugglers.

* * *

**The three million bottles of Alfonso I Solera brandy now being kept at Co's warehouse inside the Clark Economic Zone are being spirited out little by little and distributed in Metro Manila outlets.**

**If you're a brandy drinker, you probably have come across that brand of brandy being sold in liquor stores.**

**Co's cover for the imported brandy is that he would sell them at his Puregold Duty Free shops inside Clark and Subic Freeport Zone.**

**But how could Puregold Duty Free shops consume three million bottles of brandy?**

**My sources say Co is offering P5 million in specific taxes with the Clark Development Authority for the warehouse full of Alfonso I Solera.**

* * *

Maria Fe Felipe of Mendoza St., San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City, died while in detention at the Camp Karingal, Central Police District headquarters.

Felipe was charged with drug pushing. She had been held without bail since February 2003.

Her relatives swear she was a victim of a police frame-up.

Maria Fe, they say, got the ire of the female barangay captain in her neighborhood. The "kapitana" suspected Maria Fe was the cause of her separation from her husband. The kapitana's husband is Maria Fe's brother.

Through the aid of some policemen friends, the kapitana had Maria Fe's house raided, according to Maria Fe's relatives.

The cops "found" methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu) inside the house.

Very confidentially, during a conversation out of court, a certain Alvin Pineda of the Munoz, Quezon City police precinct admitted to the prosecutor that he merely framed Maria Fe at the request of the barangay captain.

But the admission was made outside the court and the prosecutor could not do anything.

If Maria Fe's relatives are telling the truth, then the victim died a bitter woman.

Will somebody please investigate the allegations of the victim's relatives?

* * *

**After a couple of years of reading jokes on text messages, I've become jaded, until I got this joke yesterday that made me rolling in laughter.**

**The joke will have to be told in Tagalog because it won't have the flavor of Filipino humor if told in English.**

***Dumating si Ngongo sa bahay at tinakpan niya ang mata ng Mrs. niya.***

***"Nges hu!,"* he said.**

**Wife: *Tangina mo! Nges hu, nges hu ka pa diyan. E, ikaw lang naman ang ngongo dito!"***

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## PNP TRAINING SHOCKER

# Hepatitis afflicts 46 recruits

**By Christian Esguerra and Margaux Ortiz**

A TOTAL of 46 police recruits undergoing training in Laguna and Quezon are believed to have been afflicted with hepatitis B.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, Calabarzon regional director, however, said four had been confined in a hospital in Canlubang, Laguna, after testing positive with the disease.

The rest, who were suspected of also having hepatitis B, have been allowed to resume training along with 800 other recruits.

Philippine National Police officials learned of the hepatitis B cases last week after the Philippine National Red Cross tested the recruits for diseases prior to a blood-letting exercise.

According to Varilla, Red Cross officials expressed reservation over the health of 46 of the potential blood donors.

This prompted him to have these examined at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital in Manila, where four proved positive of infection.

Hepatitis B is a serious viral disease that can be easily transmitted through sexual activity, sharing injecting equipment, toothbrushes or razors, unsterilized tattooing and body piercing equipment.

Because of the discovery, the National Police Commission has recommended that recruits be also tested for hepatitis.

Napolcom officer-in-charge Linda Malenab-Hornilla yesterday said PNP recruitment tests include only drug, blood-typing, neuro-psychological and physical examinations.

She said hepatitis testing would be required in future PNP recruitment.

SOME police recruits, like these getting their hands dirty during a cleanup in Camp Crame, have reportedly fallen sick. PDI PHOTO

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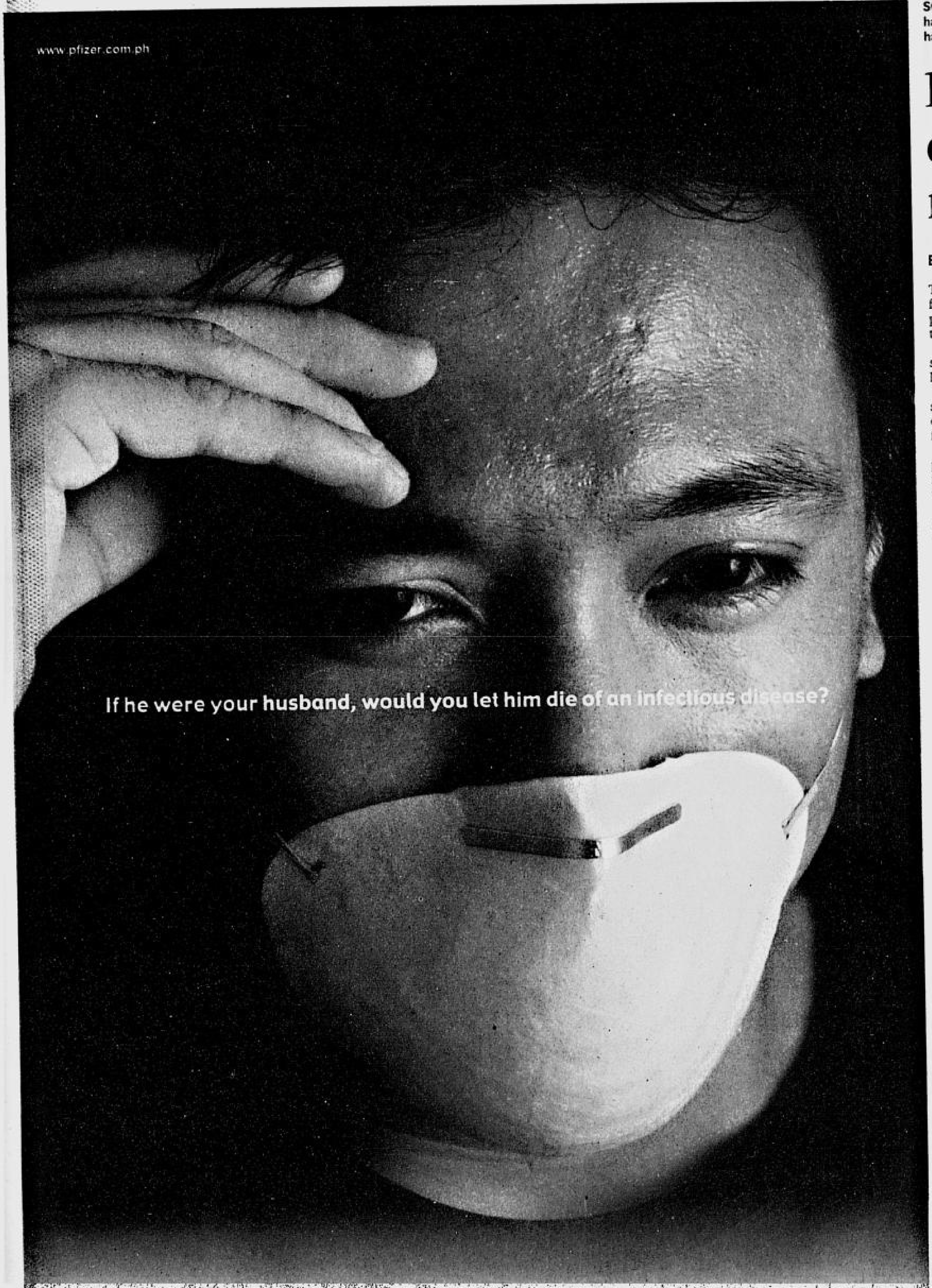
If he were your husband, would you let him die of an infectious disease?

# Death row dozen get reprieve

**By Luige del Puerto and Joyce Abaño**

TWELVE of the 14 death convicts scheduled for execution this month have been given reprieve, said Supt. Venancio Tesoro, head of the New Bilibid Prisons.

Tesoro said President Macapagal-Arroyo stayed the execution of the 12 convicts until May.

"Not all the cases are for kidnap-for-ransom," Tesoro said. "Eight of the men were convicted for rape, while four were convicted for murder."

Earlier, the President moved back on her promise not to mete out the capital punishment and ordered the execution of those involved in kidnapping for ransom.

Tesoro refused to disclose the names of the death convicts but added that there were 41 executions scheduled this year.

### Lara and Licayan

The two kidnapping convicts up for lethal injection are believed to be Roberto Lara and Roderick Licayan, who were supposed to have been executed last Jan. 30.

The Supreme Court, however, granted them a 30-day reprieve to allow their lawyers to present new evidence that could prove their innocence.

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Mabansag and De los Reyes are believed to hold the key to the acquittal of Lara and Licayan.

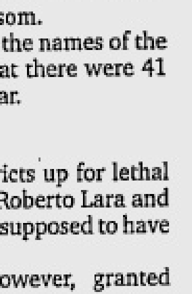
# Pasig barangay men hounded for eating dog

**By Luige del Puerto**

A PAKISTANI woman has accused 15 members of a barangay security force in Pasig City of eating stray dogs.

Yamil Jadwani, 43, of Barangay Kapitolyo, Pasig City, on Saturday went to the police station after she allegedly saw the men—clad in barangay security uniforms—cooking what appeared to be a freshly slaughtered dog at the back of the barangay hall.

The police are set to ask Restituto Cabrera Jr., chair of Barangay Kapitolyo, to have his men report to the station for a police line up.



Jadwani, who claims to be a member of an international animal rights group, told the police that when she went closer to the barangay hall to find out what the 15 men were cooking, she was horrified to see the carcass of a stray dog and concluded that the men were cooking dog meat.

A few police officers accompanied Jadwani to the barangay hall. But they failed to spot the men who slaughtered and cooked the dog, PO2 Ramil Menor said.

If found guilty, the 15 watchmen face up to two years imprisonment and a fine of up to P5,000 for violating R.A. 8485 or the Animal Welfare Act.

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*Editor* **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

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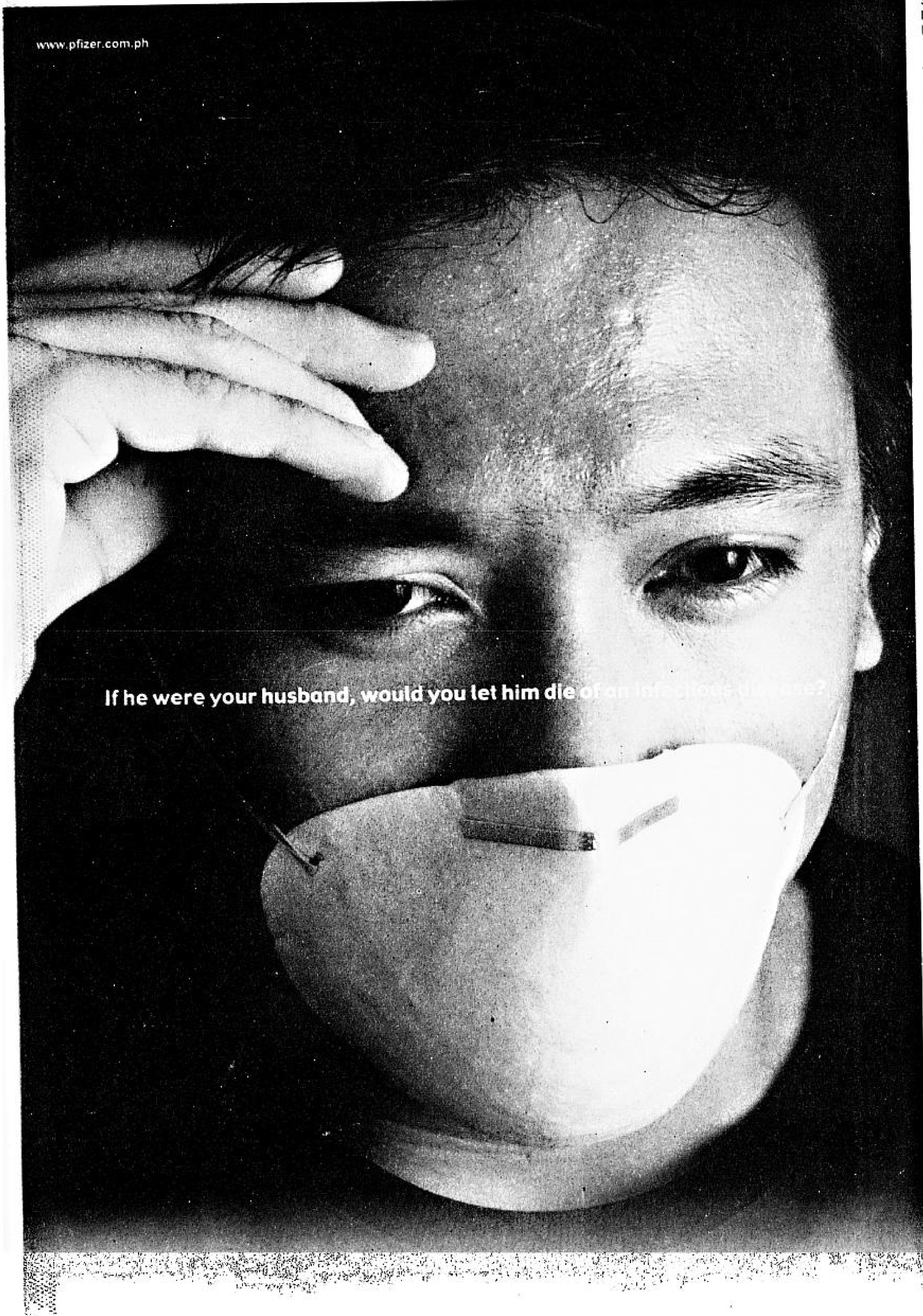
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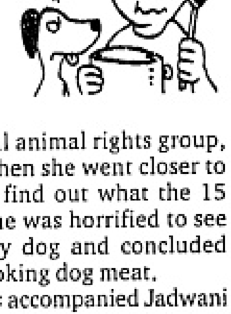

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**US NCAA;** 2 p.m.; Solar Sports - The Temple Owls travel to the desert to battle the Arizona St. Sun Devils.

**TENNIS:** 2004 Australian Open; 4 p.m.; Solar Sports - Check out one of the more memorable matches down under.

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Compiled by L. Manguiat

SPORTS

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*Editor* **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
*Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

# 'Oust-Buhain' loses fire

**By Trina Ibarle,** *Contributor*

THE CAMPAIGN to oust Eric Buhain from the Philippine Sports Commission seems to have lost steam.

Rey Jaylo, the judo president, said he, along with some national sports association heads, was satisfied with Buhain's explanation regarding the lack of funds during a meeting at the Century Park Sheraton yesterday.

"Bottomline is that the funds are limited," said Jaylo, who apologized to Buhain for joining nine NSA presidents who had signed a petition calling for Buhain's head for "mismanaging" the PSC and his "lack of concern and support" for the NSAs.

Aside from Jaylo, those who signed the petition were Vic Valbuena (table tennis), Richard Gomez (fencing), Chito Ilagan (swimming), Claudio Altura (yachting), Noel Buenaventura (gymnastics), Benjie Ramos (rowing), Luciano Lim (bodybuilding) and Dr. Sim Chi Tat (rowing).

Buhain stressed that the PSC is being hounded by monetary constraints during the meeting attended by some 22 NSA heads or their representatives.

"*Talagang may problema tayo* (We really have a problem). You may not like me. However, *ang* bottomline *dito ay limitado talaga ang pera* (there's not enough money)," said Buhain.

The PSC has released about P85 million, or 80 percent of its total budget of P105 million. These included funds for the allowances of athletes but not the wages of foreign coaches hired by the PSC for the different NSAs.

Buhain presented the records of financial assistance given to the sports associations to refute the claim by the disgruntled NSAs that the PSC has not been transparent in giving financial support to the NSAs and the athletes.

"If there's a question on what we're doing, the COA (Commission on Audit) will tell us. With regard to the training of athletes for the 2005 SEA Games, *hindi kami 'yun* (it's not our responsibility)," Buhain added.

The PSC's share from the national budget goes to running the agency and the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

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**TAKING THE INITIATIVE:** PBA chair Buddy Encarnado (left) and vice chair Alberto Manlapit pay a courtesy call on Justice Secretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez last week in an effort to establish a smooth and harmonious relationship between the pro league and the Department of Justice. Fil-foreigners playing in the PBA are required to obtain affirmation of citizenship from the department.

# PBA going to Tubod this May

By June Navarro

ASSURED of maximum security, the Philippine Basketball Association has agreed to hold a game in Tubod, Lanao del Norte for the first time in its 30-year history.

This developed as Lanao del Norte Gov. Imelda Dimaporo yesterday guaranteed the league's safety if the PBA brings its act to a region known for its share of rebel insurgencies in the past.

The 2003 Palarong Pambansa was staged in the same Tubod town last year with no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo as opening-day guest.

"We will deploy hundreds of Marines in the area to ensure the security of the entire PBA entourage and the fans who will troop to watch the game," PBA media bureau chief Willie Marcial quoted Dimaporo as saying.

The PBA plans to schedule its Mindanao sortie in Tubod in May should the Dimaporos meet the league's criteria in organizing and hosting out-of-town games.

But Tacloban and Butuan are bidding for the same PBA slot, Marcial added.

"If Tubod fails to meet the criteria in time for the target date, we will move their hosting in October when the league unfurls the new calendar and format," Marcial told the INQUIRER.

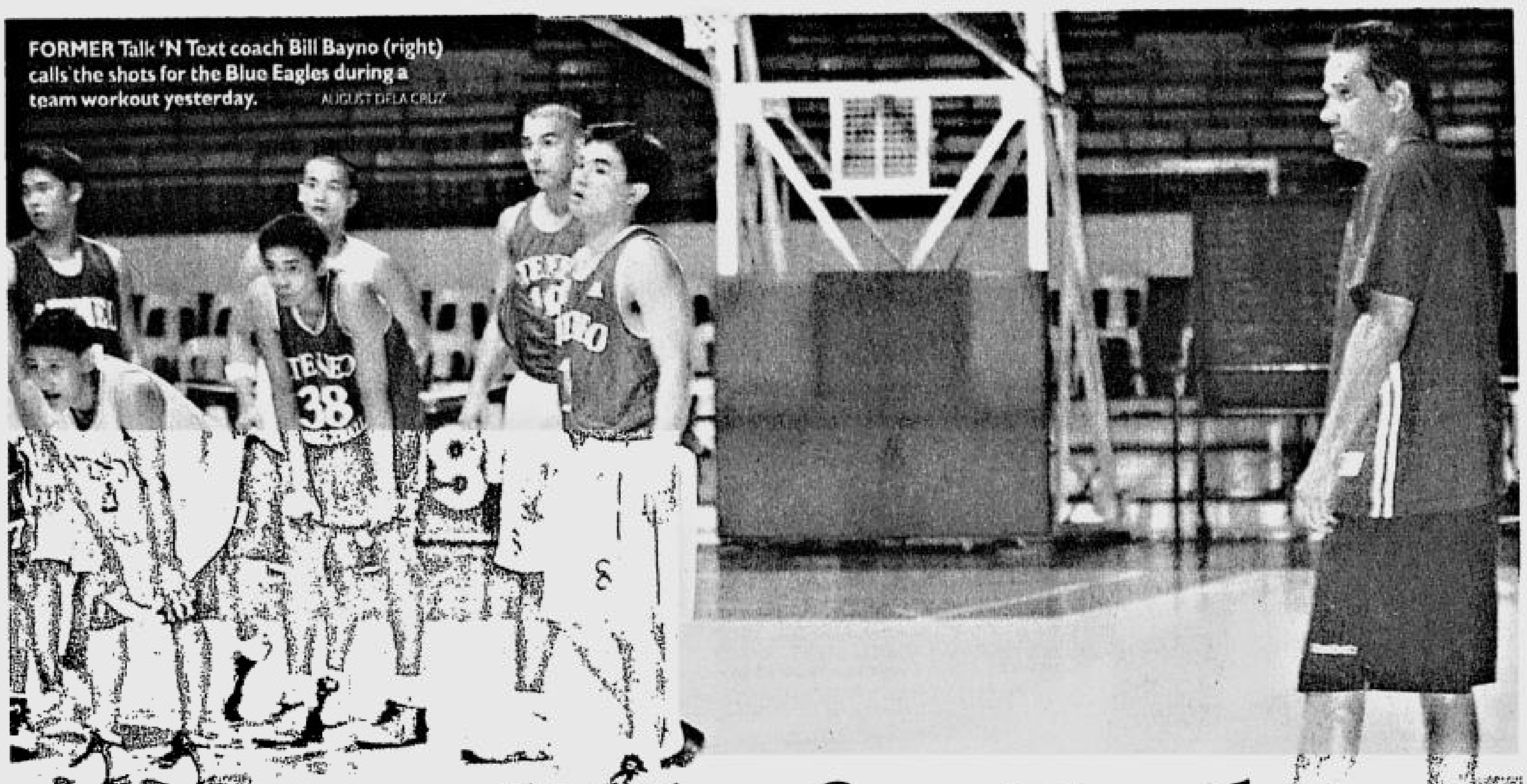
The PBA game in Tubod will be played at the state-of-the-art Mindanao Civic Center, a venue approved by the International Basketball Federation (Fiba), the world governing body in the sport.

Dimaporo has also committed transportation, hotel and billeting for the entourage aside from marketing packages which seek to boost the image of the PBA further in the region.

If Tubod makes it, the PBA will have nine out-of-town games for the Fiesta Conference which kicks off on Feb. 22.

General Santos City will host the first out-of-town sortie this year on March 4, followed by Bataan, Dumaguete, Cebu, Lucena, Zamboanga, Puerto Princesa and Davao City.

Other cities in the Visayas and Mindanao wanting to host games would be accommodated in September when the PBA begins its new season.



FORMER Talk 'N Text coach Bill Bayno (right) calls the shots for the Blue Eagles during a team workout yesterday. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

# Foreign help for Eagles

## *Foreign stint for Archers*

By Dennis U. Eroa

IN A NO-NONSENSE bid to gain the upperhand over its rivals, Ateneo has enlisted the services of former Talk 'N Text mentor Bill Bayno to shore up its title aspiration in this year's UAAP basketball wars.

But La Salle isn't far behind. The Archers, champions from 1998-2001, are plotting their return to the top of the varsity basketball with training overseas.

"La Salle is planning to either taste the Korean-type of training or compete in a tournament in the US," said a top official.

Ateneo failed in its title-retention bid last year, succumbing to the vast experience of Far Eastern University, but Bayno's presence is expected to sharpen the skills of the Eagles, who will miss the solid presence of two-time UAAP MVP Rich Alvarez and the flamboyant Wesley Gonzales.

The 6-foot-4 Alvarez was chosen by Shell as this year's top PBA draft pick, while Gonzales, also a first-rounder, will suit up for FedEx in the pro wars.

"Bill is going to help Ateneo during the pre-season," said a Talk 'N Text insider, who begged not to be identified.

Bayno recently helped the Phone Pals during their monthlong sojourn to the US, where they also trained under Jerry Tarkanian of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

Bayno's stint is courtesy of PLDT chair Manny Pangilinan, an avid supporter of the Eagles. Bayno attended the Eagles practice yesterday at the Loyola gym.

Still around to power the Eagles to the prestigious crown are Larry Fonacier, LA Tenorio, Paolo Bugia, Chris Tiu and Magnum Membrere.

After finishing a respectable third despite a rookie-laden roster last season, the Taft-based Archers are determined to take a one-conference leave of absence in the PBL to gain needed training overseas.

The explosive Mark Cardona, last year's rookie of the year Joseph Casio, bullstrong Jerwin Gaco and Mark Benitez will lead the Archers' attack in the 67th UAAP season.

# NGAP left with few RP Open alternatives

By Jong Arcano

UNLESS it settles for what it feels is a sub-standard course at Mimosa, the National Golf Association of the Philippines may be forced to choose from only two options left for a venue to stage the DHL-Philippine Open golf championship on Feb. 26-29.

This developed as the final inspection of the composite course to be used over the weekend hardly changed the stance of the organizing committee that Mimosa is unfit to host the $150,000 (about P8.4 million) RP Open.

The fate of the tournament at Mimosa was the subject of a meeting between NGAP head Rod Feliciano and Clark Development Corp. executive vice president Chichos Luciano yesterday.

But the INQUIRER learned from a reliable source that, even before the meeting, CDC president Dr. Emmanuel Angeles had already decided against Mimosa's hosting of the Open upon his arrival from a business trip abroad.

The source said Angeles was unhappy because of the series of negative remarks thrown at Mimosa by NGAP officials.

Angeles was invited to attend today's PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn-Manila Pavilion to clear the air regarding the Open issue.

"We're still confident they (Mimosa) won't back out," NGAP president Rod Feliciano told the INQUIRER.

In the event Mimosa backs out, the NGAP may have to choose between Riviera and Tagaytay Midlands.

Riviera president Commodore Danny Pizarro has already instructed general manager Buddy Resurreccion to prepare the course in anticipation of a sudden transfer.

# RP-Lhuillier 'Tryouts ng Bayan' starts

By Roy Luarca

CAGAYAN DE ORO City—There were no instant discoveries, but coaches Dong Vergeire and Boyzie Zamar were satisfied with the start of the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier "Tryouts ng Bayan" yesterday at the Corpus Christi Gym here.

Forty aspirants showed up, with the number expected to increase today as more hopefuls from nearby areas arrive to join the tryouts, the longest and most comprehensive ever to be undertaken in the country.

"We're overwhelmed by the warm response of the basketball community here. This is a good start for our program," said Vergeire and Zamar, referring to the two-month, city-hopping, island-crossing tryouts they will be supervising to find new talents for the national pool.

Helping Vergeire and Zamar, both multititled and Southeast Asian Games champion coaches, conduct the tryouts conceptualized by Cebuana Lhuillier honcho Jean Henri Lhuillier are Beaujing Acot and Arsenio Dysangco.

Andy Calingin, son of Gov. Antonio Calingin and head of the Provincial Sports and Development Board, brought along members of the Misamis Oriental team.

Cited by Andy, also the local coordinator of the Philippine Sports Commission, were Julius Navales, a fleet-footed slasher and outside gunner, Jester Adams and Jerome Numeran.

After the tryouts ended at noon, the coaching staff held a free clinic from 4-7 p.m., also at the same venue. Unlike the tryouts which are open, the clinic was confined to players 12-17 years old and held as part of the Basketball Association of the Philippines' outreach program.

Ricky Calimag, Dennis Madrid, Celino Cruz and Richie Melencio, all members of the victorious Philippine team to the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games managed by Lhuillier, helped run the free clinic.

# Korean invasion

**SPECTATOR**

*Al S. Mendoza*

WE see Koreans all over, the South Korean variety that is. (I assume the North Koreans, not as free as their South Korean brothers to roam the earth, are not yet that sophisticated like the Bin Laden-leaning terrorists as to easily penetrate our shores?)

But the South Koreans—why, we see them in our malls or movies, in our streets or restaurants and, yes, in our golf courses. They come in throngs, mind you. Their own restaurants and hotels have sprouted like mushrooms in the entire archipelago. The Korean alphabet on buildings and other edifices has become more visible than GMA billboards.

Nothing wrong there.

The world is a stage. Anybody is free to sample it. Just make sure, though, you follow the rules and you'll be all right. Welcomed with even a red-carpet treatment.

But, alas, that has not been happening in many of our golf courses nationwide. Seemingly, the golfing Koreans have taken control. Generally speaking, they act and think as if they own what they don't actually own.

You see them throwing their weight around in golf courses with alarming consistency. As a result, verbal jousts are a common sight between a Filipino golfer and a Korean golfer.

You see them acting arrogantly, sometimes, with even murderous intentions. One golf course manager got himself almost killed by a Korean driving a golf cart.

"He did not even apologize," said the Filipino golf official. "He even made it appear that it was my fault. That if he had ran me over, nobody's to blame but me."

You see that and many other harmful deeds happening almost in every golf course in the land—courtesy of the Koreans.

Koreans forcing their way into the first tee even if it's not their turn yet to tee off.

Koreans hitting shots from the tee box even when there's still someone about to hit a shot on the fairway.

Koreans hitting shots even when there's still someone about to stroke his putt on the green.

It's become almost commonplace that I won't be surprised if one day, a Korean gets killed on the golf course, either by clubbing or stabbing.

We are partly to blame, though.

We allow them to control us instead of us controlling them.

We allow them to intimidate us with the power of their currency, effectively reducing us to mere beggars.

We allow them to trample on our sovereignty, for a fast buck.

We have lost all honor and dignity in the name of money.

One day, we will wake up to see our golf courses being owned by Koreans, run by Koreans, with Filipinos being mere servants serving them kimchi. Worse than one being tagged as a running dog of Abu Sayyaf.

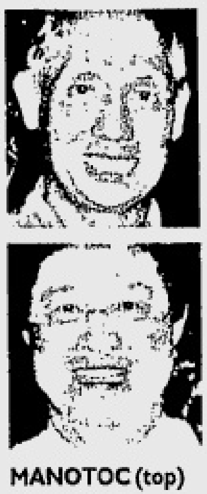
They have invaded the village that I live in, renting whole houses and noisily drinking beer till the small hours of the morning any day of the week.

To be sure, let me assure you that I am not anti-Korean. I have friends from Korea. In fact, one dear friend of mine is a Korean. I met him in Busan during my coverage of the Busan Asian Games in 2002. Very soft-spoken, a gentleman to a fault, he accepted the job as golf guide for the Asian Games even though he is a wealthy businessman. To this day, he calls me every now and then just to say hello. Last December, he greeted me "Merry Christmas."

What I am saying is, the Koreans aren't bad *per se*. If they've been bad to us in our own land and continue being so, not their fault. We are at fault because we allow them to do what they want to do to us.

It's as simple as that.

# Espiritu, Manotoc shake Mango Tee with rare sweep



MANOTOC (top) and Espiritu

FORMER banker OV Espiritu and Tommy Manotoc did the unthinkable in the recent Mango Tee tournament at the Alabang Country Club: they romped off with the tournament's two major awards.

Espiritu and Manotoc, who played as a team, clinched both the overall title (low net) and the low gross titles, marking the first time that a pair went home with the two trophies in the 20-year history of the Mango Tee.

No one in the field of 256 teams played as solid as the two long-time partners who pulled off blowout wins in both departments.

They posted 78 Stableford points for both days with their 156 aggregate, pushing them six ahead of the father-and-son duo of Roy and Raymund Sangil in overall play.

Their even par gross of 72-72-144 was too hot for the field as the nearest team (John Papa and JP Reyes) could only tally 125.

Espiritu and Manotoc started out as jungolf standouts at Wack Wack. Manotoc, a long-time national standout, is a scratch player while Espiritu plays to a six-handicap.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Pilipinas Shell, Taylormade adidas, Citimotors and Allied Domecq/Carlos I were the major sponsors of the Mango Tee, the member-guest invitational of ACC, presented by Smart Communications.

Ildefonso Chan drove home the event's biggest prize, a Mitsubishi Lancer, which was raffled off to the 512 players in the field.

The Sangils, scoring 70-80, settled for the Class D plum, beating Ricky Canlas and Jeremy Parulan in a countback.

Arnel Paras and Rick Kautz topped Class A with their 79-70-149, two better than the score of Monto Briones and JP Castrillo.

Rustico Recto-Abe Avena topped Class B and Dexter Pasion-Lincoln Lim prevailed in Class C with 149.

Recto-Avena's 81-67-148 won by just a point over Tolentino Arguelles-Mario Badillo. Pasion-Lim tallied nipped Carlos Sison and Popoy Monsod in a countback.

# Bro. Benedict Cup set at MGC

THE DLSU Homecoming Class of '79 is hosting the inaugural alumni golf tournament named in honor of Bro. J. Benedict, FSC, at the Manila Golf Club on Feb. 27 and March 1. Proceeds from the tournament will go to the Bro. J. Benedict Scholarship Endowment Fund. For inquiries, call the DLSAA at 523-6158

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# Negros Occ., Masbate XIs forge Coke title tiff

STA. BARBARA, Iloilo—Negros Occidental's Don Bosco Technical Institute and Masbate Comprehensive National High School scored overtime victories over their respective rivals early yesterday to arrange a showdown for the 20th Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 national football title here.

The Negrenses nipped host Barotac Nuevo National Comprehensive High, 5-4, while Masbate downed Compostela Valley's Maco National High, 4-2, both via a penalty shootout, to pave the way for their 1:30 p.m. meeting today.

Iloilo and Compostela Valley will meet earlier at 8 a.m. for third place in the tourney organized by the Philippine Football Federation and sponsored by Coca-Cola Export Corp.

The Negrenses and the Ilonggos battled to a 1-1 deadlock in regulation while Masbate and Compostela Valley finished tied at 2-2 also in regulation period.

Jan Ealvin Espinosa scored with barely a minute left to salvage the tie after Iloilo had pulled in front in the 12th minute on Ryan Hemida's marker.

Francis Llevares and Nicanor Palacio scored for Masbate while Al-adel Saleda and Jervie Paalan struck for Compostela Valley.

Ivan Paul Bentic, Michael Orbino, Jomil Dequina, Francisco Donieza and Frederic Mongcal knocked in their penalty shots to spell the difference in Negros Occidental's victory.

Llevares, Jomel Floresta, John Francis Escarriaga and Rodrson Escobido converted Masbate's penalty attempts.

# Singh tops Pebble by 3

## *Fijian's amazing run moves him closer to Tiger Woods*

PEBBLE BEACH, California—Vijay Singh blew away the field at Pebble Beach to continue an amazing run that keeps moving him closer to his ultimate goal—replacing Tiger Woods at No. 1.

Singh birdied his first three holes Sunday to bury co-leader Arron Oberholser and anyone else who had thoughts of catching him, closing with a 3-under 69 for a three-shot victory in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

The hardworking Fijian had an easy time, leading by as many as five shots on the back nine and allowing plenty of time to soak in breathtaking views on another pristine day on the Monterey Peninsula.

Equally spectacular was his game.

Despite bumpy greens that kept Woods away, Singh managed to make 25 birdies for the week. He hit the flag twice in the final round, and would have done it a third time, except his chip on No. 10 was so true it dropped in the cup.

Singh finished at 16-under 262, three shots ahead of Jeff Maggert.

Maggert overcame a four-putt for double bogey on No. 16 with birdies on his last two holes for a 69.

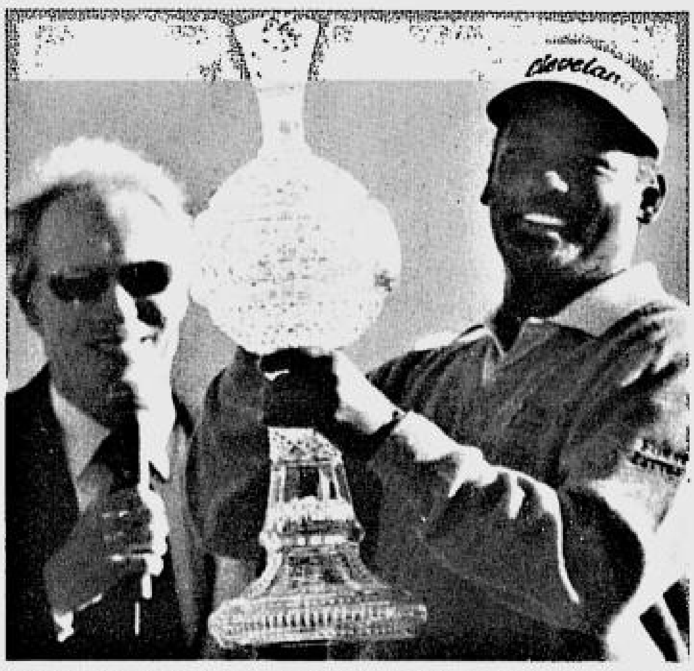
Phil Mickelson also had a 69 and finished third, his third top-10 in as many starts this year.

That's nothing compared with Singh, who ran his streak to 12 consecutive finishes in the top 10 dating to the NEC Invitational in August. He is two away from the modern-day record set by Jack Nicklaus in 1977.

The real target is Woods.

Singh, who earned $954,000 for his 16th career victory, is firmly entrenched at No. 2 in the world ranking. At this rate, it won't be long before Woods is looking over his shoulder.

"I'm playing pretty good," Singh said. "I'm more concerned with how I'm playing week in and week out. I want to be No. 1 before I finish. *AP*



**ACTOR Clint Eastwood (left) looks on as Singh holds his trophy.** REUTERS

# Payton lifts LA Lakers

ORLANDO, Florida—Derek Fisher stole the ball from Rod Strickland and set up Gary Payton's layup with 4.1 seconds left, leading the Los Angeles Lakers to a 98-96 victory Sunday over the Orlando Magic.

The Lakers rallied from an 18-point deficit to hand Orlando its sixth straight loss. *AP*

**Other results:** Indiana 97, Miami 91; Memphis 99, Minnesota 98; Portland 95, Seattle 85; New York 110, Clippers 104; Sacramento 115, Denver 92; New Jersey 99, Philadelphia 87; Toronto 84, Golden State 81 (OT)

# SPORTSWATCH

## All set for 15th Uratex caddies tilt

GIFT certificates worth P75,000 each will go to the winners of the men's individual and team events while P20,000 is the top prize in the ladies' division of the 15th Uratex National Caddies Championship. The three winners will also receive the Robert Go Cheng Cups in honor of the man who started the tournament in 1988 as well as TV sets donated by Bayer and Frank Manalo. The four-day event, believed to be the only one of its kind involving caddies on a national scope, starts Feb. 17 at the Valley Golf and Country Club's Executive course in Antipolo City. Cheng launched the event at the Capitol Hills Golf and Country Club to provide caddies a national tournament of their own and discover talent from their ranks. The usual hole-in-one prizes of P100,000 each on the sixth and 11th come from traditional donor Yakult Philippines president Victory "Django" Dysun. So far, 20 teams have signed up. Registration centers are Valley (658-4901) and National Golf Association of the Philippines (521-1587) through Jake Ayson. Second places in the men's individual and team competitions are worth P42,350 while the ladies' division runner-up will receive P15,000—all in gift certificates. Cheng, founder of the RGC Group of Companies, died Oct. 29, 2003 of a heart attack. He was 58.

## Tagaytay hosts Ganoy-Inal crown fight

RANEE Ganoy of Mandaluyong Gym squares off with Renato Inal of Elorde Gym for the PBF lightweight title fight this Thursday at the Tagaytay Eastern Gym in Barangay Sungay, Tagaytay City. The showdown, part of the Mayor Francis Tolentino's annual thanksgiving, is promoted by Jun Sarreal. Ganoy is fresh off a knockout win over Al Deliguer of Imus, Cavite, while Inal lost in his title bid against Bobby Pacquiao last Dec. 1 in Subic. Another clash to watch is that of Jack Maldecir of Sultan Kudarat of Mindanao against Rene Bañares of Malabon City.

## YMCA Makati swim, tennis lessons set

THE YMCA Makati is offering pre-summer swimming and tennis lessons for adults. The swim lessons on Feb. 16 will be conducted in three batches, while the tennis instructions on Feb. 9 will have four sessions. Participants can avail themselves of a free one-year membership card and a 10-percent discount. Basketball, martial arts for children and self-defense course for women are also lined up on April 12. Swimming sessions will be held on March 29. YMCA Makati is located at 7 Sacred Heart Plaza Street., San Antonio Village, Makati City. For inquiries, call 899-6380, 899-6101, 899-6105, 899-6097, 895-9525.

## Upstart caging league to start Feb. 28

A NEW basketball tournament called the National Basketball Development League (NBDL) is scheduled to unwrap on Feb. 28 either at the Adamson University or Arellano University (Legarda) gym. Tournament organizer Ted Magno has invited various collegiate and commercial teams to a meeting at 2 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 16, at the PSC Cafeteria, Ground Floor, Administration Building, along P. Ocampo Sr. Street. Interested teams may contact Magno at (049)568-0300 or 0919-5968978 and 0919-8520920.

## Catch world's finest rally driving on AXN

SPORTS fans will be treated to the best in car rallying on AXN's World Rally Championship (WRC) program (pay-TV exclusive). Enthusiasts can watch the highlights of the Uddenholm Sweden Rally today at 6 p.m. The most popular spectator sport in the world with a staggering global audience of about 5 billion, the 2004 WRC features the world's top drivers who race in sophisticated cars made by Mitsubishi (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo WRC04), Peugeot (Peugeot 307 WRC), Citroen (Citroen Xsara WRC), Ford (Ford Focus RS WRC) and Subaru (Subaru Impreza WRC) in some of the world's toughest terrain.

## Three entries co-champs in NCA derby

THREE entries emerged as co-champions at the close of the first February fights the other night of the 2004 NCA 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum hosted by Ito Yñares, Claude Bautista, Franklin Bautista and Benjamin Bautista. The victors with six wins each were the entries Jima Fer Mapalad II of the Madlambayan Brothers, Binangonan Balbina of Yñares and Danding Cojuangco, and Lucy Rin I Firefly Binangonan of Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman. Following closely in second place with five wins each were J-Cap of John Capinpin, Greenwood Balbina of Butch Macasaet, LCC Binangonan of Yñares and Louie Cua, and R&B CPB Farm of Claude Bautista and Yñares, and Sundance 25 of Ronnie Puno.

## 33 cockers advance to Roligon finals

THE CROWD-DRAWING 14th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby of Roligon Mega Cockpit enters its semifinals round today as participants try to inch closer to the jackpot prize of P3.6 million. More than 100 fights are on tap today in the derby sponsored by Thunderbird Enertone. After four days of eliminations, 33 cockers tallied three victories each, making them automatic qualifiers to the championship round on Thursday. The total number of registered entries swelled to 325 as breeders from Negros Occidental, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Zambales, Ilocos and Pangasinan confirmed their participation and will field seven cocks each on Thursday. "What is amazing is that the derby is being dominated by unknown breeders who topple the so-called bigtime cockers," said Roligon owner Rolly Ligon, who is assisted in the derby by general manager Danny Ty and Roming Vergara. The latest batch of qualifiers were Romulo Jimenez, Nono San Pablo, Bobby del Rosario, Bogs Davao, Dr. Ayong Lorenzo, Mario Segovia, Bobot Batangas and Jeff Chua. For inquiries, call 852-9812, 852-9774, 833-2275 and 833-1638.

**PRIZE CATCH: Ateneo's two-time UAAP most valuable player Rich Alvarez is welcomed to the Shell Turbochargers by Pilipinas Shell vice president for corporate affairs Romy de Guzman (fourth from left), Shell team manager Bobby Kanapi (second from left), assistant team manager Vicky Araneta (extreme left) and other company officers after signing his lucrative three-and-a-half-year contract with the team recently at Shell House in Makati City.**

# *Old rivals meet in PBA Press Awards*

IT WAS a reunion of sorts. Fabled coaching rivals Dante Silverio and Baby Dalupan as well as some of the referees who officiated their memorable games met again Sunday night, this time to share the limelight during the PBA Press Awards. Silverio was the basketball scribes' guest of honor, Dalupan awarded the Coach of the Year trophy and the refs received plaques for their contribution to the league during the annual rites held at the Bayview Hotel in Manila. Awards were handed out and, as usual, basketball anecdotes were the main fare during the happy evening.

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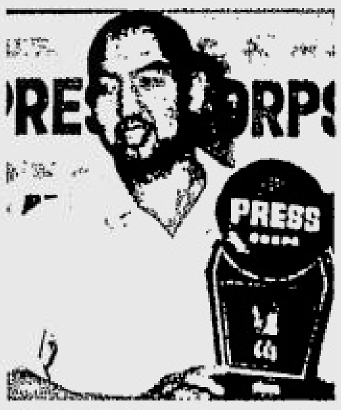
**BABY'S MAN: Coach of the Year Vince "Chot" Reyes of the Coca-Cola Tigers (left) with former Crispa Redmanizers coach Virgilio "Baby" Dalupan, after whom the award was named; former Toyota Comets mentor Dante Silverio and PBA Commissioner Noli Eala.** RUDY ESPERAS

**COMEBACK Player of the Year Ferdinand "Bong" Ravena**

**MR. QUALITY Minutes Ren-Ren Ritualo (right) receives his award from the INQUIRER's June Navarro.** RUDY ESPERAS



**REINFORCED Conference MVP Jeffrey Cariaso**

# Espiritu 9th among Asians after Stage 3

RAUB, Malaysia—Veteran Victor Espiritu became the leading Filipino rider after Stage 3 of the 9th Tour de Langkawi Sunday even as the Philippines remained fourth in the Asian team classification.

The 1996 Marlboro Tour champion, who won a silver medal in the road race in the last Southeast Asian Games, stuck it out with a big group in the notorious Fraser Hill climb and finished one minute and 28 seconds behind stage winner Brett Lancaster.

Espiritu's strong showing boosted him to ninth overall in the Asian category, seven minutes and 49 seconds behind leader Ghader Mizbani of Iran.

Rhyan Tanguilig checked in 19 seconds behind Espiritu and, after eight minutes, came Albert Primero, Albert Catalan and Ronald Gorrantes, who arrived with splinter groups.

Lloyd Reynante, who started the day in eighth place among Asians, all but crawled to the finish.

"*Napagod ako ng husto kahapon* (I was dead-tired after yesterday)," Reynante said.

The Filipinos, running under the Pagcor banner, trailed pacesetting Japan in the team race by 13 minutes and 26 seconds.

Iran stood second followed by China.

Freddy Gonzales of Colombia showed the way in the overall race followed by teammate Marlon Perez.

Fraser Hill proved to be a monster to some. But Espiritu's familiarity with the place served him in good stead to reach the finish in a large bunch.

"*Alam ko na kasi yung rota na ito. Mabilis talaga ang pababa.* (I'm familiar with this route and it's really fast downhill," said Espiritu.

# Roddick takes charge as US Cuppers sweep Austrian foes

UNCASVILLE, Connecticut—Opening and closing with record-tying 241-kph aces, Andy Roddick beat Jurgen Melzer, 6-4, 6-2, Sunday to help the United States wrap up a 5-0 sweep of Austria in the first round of the Davis Cup.

Robby Ginepri defeated Stefan Koubek, 7-5, 6-2, in the last match of a World Group tie clinched on Saturday.

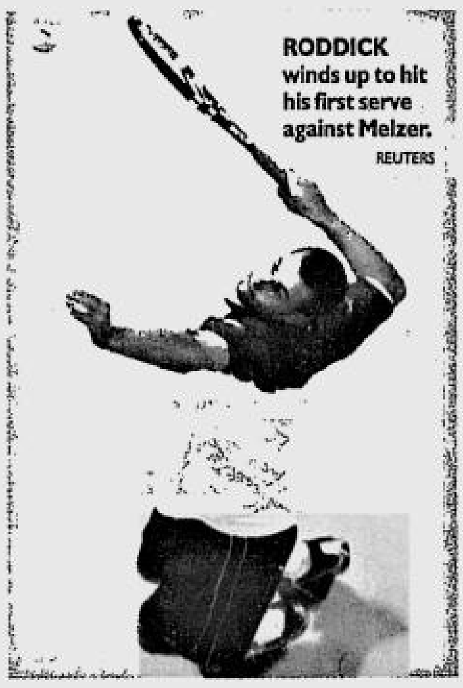
Ginepri and Roddick won singles matches Friday, when US Open champion Roddick broke the service speed mark of 239 kph he shared with Greg Rusedski. Twins Bob and Mike Bryan beat Melzer and Julian Knowle in doubles Saturday.

"It was a dominating performance for us. That gives me a lot of confidence," US captain Patrick McEnroe said. "It is going to get tougher from here, but I am pretty pleased."

In April's quarterfinals, the United States will host Sweden, which knocked off defending champion Australia, 4-1. The other quarterfinals are: Belarus vs. Argentina, Switzerland vs. France, and Netherlands vs. Spain.

McEnroe has said he thinks his current crop of players is good enough to end the country's Davis Cup drought. The last American title came in 1995.

"You have to get to that top tier first before you can become perennial favorites," Roddick said. "It excites Patrick, like it does the rest of us, that we have a pretty young core of guys, who are very willing and very eager to play. So I only see our team getting better as the years go on." *AP*



**RODDICK winds up to hit his first serve against Melzer.** REUTERS

# Songbird album released

TWO great artists, 12 of the best love songs and one unforgettable album—Viva Records" The Songbird and the Songwriter Journey of Love, Music to Remember."

The album, which is now available in stores, is inspired by the Valentine concert of Regine Velasquez and Ogie Alcasid at the Araneta Coliseum on February 13 and 15.

Launched on SOP last February 1, the album is not a live recording or a compilation of songs from the concert. It is a collection of OPM love songs performed by Regine and Ogie, which include Regine's "Pangako, "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw," "Pangarap Ko Ang Ibigin Ka" and "Sa Piling Mo" (love theme from Captain Barbell); and Ogie's "Kailangan Kita," "Ikaw Sana," "Huwag Kang Mawawala," "Magpakailanpaman" and "Sana," all of which he wrote.

The two also have several duets in the album, including versions of "Pangarap Ko Ang Ibigin Ka" and "Sa Piling Mo" from Captain Barbell and the hit song "Hanggang Ngayon."

Every purchase of album at Odyssey Record Bars gives the buyer the chance to win concert tickets, posters and other premium items until February 29.

## SHOW TIME

# Aga in Me

HE is one of Philippine show business' heartthrobs and best actors. In the limelight since he was a young boy and now at thirty-something, his star continues to shine and enthrall millions of fans. No wonder, that Aga Muhlach has all the right to be happy and proud. But more than the joy and pleasure that fame brings, his family has cemented the twinkle in the actor's eye.

"I love my work but now my family takes priority above anything else," Aga says in his interview with ME magazine's editor-in-chief, Cathy Babao-Guballa.

A loving husband to actress and host Charlene Gonzales and a doting father to 2-year-old twins Andres and Atasha, Aga is now relishing his newfound role.

When not taping, Aga claims to stay home and spend time with wife and kids.

With his generous heart, Aga still continues to be actively involved with Jollibee and STEAM, a foundation for the hearing impaired he has set up ten years ago. Read more about Aga Muhlach and his joys in life in ME magazine's special issue on men and love.

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8 LAST SAMURAI
9 STUCK ON YOU
10 IN THE CUT

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW** 9394749
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2 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
3 RUNAWAY JURY
4 LAST SAMURAI
5 IN THE CUT
6 SHIRI
7 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
8 BROTHER BEAR
9 MONA LISA SMILE
10 TWINS EFFECT
11 PURI
12 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS

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2 MONA LISA SMILE
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4 LAST SAMURAI
5 BROTHER BEAR
6 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
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8 RUNAWAY JURY
9 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
10 HAUNTED OFFICE
11 STUCK ON YOU
12 KILL BILL VOLUME 1

**SM CITY DAVAO** 2976988
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 LAST SAMURAI
3 SKY OF LOVE
4 LOST ISLAND
5 BROTHER BEAR
6 SHIRI

**SM CITY PAMPANGA** 7120015
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what to watch
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"Spectacular action and impassioned drama! Shiri piles one breathless sequence on top of another."
- Michael Wilmington, Chicago Tribune

A female North Korean sniper named Hee, has led agents Ryu (Han Suk-Gyu) and Lee (Song Kang-Ho) through a nightmare of burnt corpses and bloody crime scenes for ten years before suddenly vanishing. One year later she resurfaces, and with her comes a squad of North Korean commandos who have infiltrated Seoul and master-minded the theft of an experimental explosive.

NOW SHOWING
SHIRI
MTRCB Rating : P13

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ALL DIGITAL SOUND
AYALA CINEMAS PRESENTS

| G1 GLORIETTA 1 | G4 GLORIETTA 4 | GB1 GREENBELT 1 | GB3 GREENBELT 3 | ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE | 1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE | ArtFilm 1 THE CALENDAR GIRLS 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30 | GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 RUNAWAY JURY 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00, 11:30 | THX 1 MONA LISA SMILE |
| 2 MONA LISA SMILE | 2 RUNAWAY JURY | 2 MONA LISA SMILE 11:30 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30 | GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 MONA LISA SMILE 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00, 11:30 | 2 RUNAWAY JURY |
| 3 RUNAWAY JURY | GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE LAST SAMURAI 1:00 4:10 7:20 10:30 | Onstage REPERTORY'S FAME Feb. 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, Mar. 6 & 7 | GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE LAST SAMURAI 12:00 3:10 6:20 9:30 | 3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE |
| 4 THE LAST SAMURAI | 4 IN THE CUT | | GUARANTEED SEATS 4 STUCK ON YOU 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00, 11:30 | 4 IN THE CUT |
| | 5 BROTHER BEAR | | GUARANTEED SEATS 5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE [illegible] | 5 THE LAST SAMURAI |
| | 6 MONA LISA SMILE | | | |
| | 7 IN THE CUT | | | |

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 and send to 2333. Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA** (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 BROTHER BEAR
2 LOTR; RETURN OF THE KING
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 STUCK ON YOU
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 MONA LIZA SMILE
7 RUNAWAY JURY (SNEAK PREVIEW)
8 IN THE CUT
9 KILL BILL
10 A TALE OF TWO SISTER

**EASTWOOD CINEMAS** (Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 RUNAWAY JURY (SNEAK PREVIEW)
2 MONA LIZA SMILE
3 BROTHER BEAR
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

**Masagana CINEMA** (Pasay) tel 833.3290, 833.3274
1 KILL BILL
2 DAIBLO
3 LOLLIPOP

**starmall Movies** www.clickthecity.com.ph (Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 KILL BILL
2 MAPUSOK
3 DIABLO
LAST SAMURAI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) LOLLIPOP
5

**METROPOLIS star** www.clickthecity.com.ph (Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 MAPUSOK
2 LOLLIPOP
3 DIABLO
4 IN THE CUT
5 RUNAWAY JURY (SNEAK PREVIEW)
6 LAST SAMURAI

**M star** www.clickthecity.com.ph (Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 STUCK ON YOU
2 WRONG TURN

**PREMIERE CINEMA** (Makati City) tel 892.2503 THX

**Centre Plaza Cinema** (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 LORD OF THE RING-3
2 SCARY MOVIE

**Sunshine** (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 BENEATH LOCHNESS
2 NANANABIK
3
4

**GOTESCO CINEMA**

**Gotesco City** (Manila) tel 734.8588
RESERVE
5
6
7
8
9

**Gotesco Grand Central** (Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 PURI
2 A TALE OF TWO SISTER
3 TWIN EFFECTS
4 MONA LIZA SMILE
5 DIABLO
6 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
7 SHIRI
8 LAST SAMURAI
9 LOLLIPOP

**Gotesco Commonwealth** tel 951.0083
1 RESERVE
2
3
4
5

**Gotesco Ortigas** tel 656.6795
1 DIABLO
2 WISHER
3 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
4 LOLLIPOP
5 LAST SAMURAI

**Universal** (Manila) tel 733.2470
1 RESERVE

**Dilson** (Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson INTERNET QUEEN
Lords BELYAS

**MARKET! MARKET!** Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 KILL BILL
2 DAYO
3 LOLLIPOP
4 RESERVE

**Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA** tel 733.4238
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 MONA LIZA SMILE
3 LOLLIPOP
4 SHIRI
5 IN THE CUT

**Berma Cinema** (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 UNDER WORLD
2 LOLLIPOP

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT **Araneta Center MALL CINEPLEX 7**
1 KILL BILL
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 3
3 MONA LISA SMILE
4 IN THE CUT
5 LAST SAMURAI
6 RUNAWAY JURY (SNEAK PREVIEW)
7 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

**Jade Cinema** (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 MONA LIZA SMILE
2 MEMENTO MORI
3 TWIN EFFECTS
4 THE GRUDGE

**Cine Nepo** (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 THE GRUDGE
2 MEMENTO MORI
3 MONA LIZA SMILE
4 KILL BILL

**Cine Nepo** (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 GATHERING
2 INTERNET QUEEN
3 SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE
4 LAST SAMURAI

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall** (Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 MONA LIZA SMILE
2 PURI
3 TWIN EFFECTS

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart** (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 DIABLO
2 MONA LIZA SMILE
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 TWIN EFFECTS

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall** (Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 MONA LIZA SMILE
2 TWIN EFFECTS
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 DIABLO

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix** (Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771
1 SCARY MOVIE
2 THE GRUDGE
3 KILL BILL

**Cinema 2000 Metrotown** (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 BROTHER BEAR
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 TWIN EFFECTS
4 NAKED WEAPON

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart** (Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320
1 TWIN EFFECTS
2 KILL BILL
3 SCARY MOVIE

**Lianas Cinema** (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 MEN
2 AMBISYOSA
3 LOLLIPOP
4 ALIPIN

**Lianas MovieCity** (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 MONA LIZA SMILE
2 PURI
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 LOLLIPOP
5 DIABLO

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema** (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 WISHER
2 HIYAS

**Olivarez Los Baños** tel (049) 249.2558
1 MONA LIZA SMILE
2 MASK
3 WISHER

**Mega Center Mall** (Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 ALIPIN
2 PURI
3 LOST ISLAND
4 LAST SAMURAI

**Cabuyao** (Laguna City) tel 520.8914
1 RESERVE

**Fiesta World Mall** (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 PURI
2 BRTHER BEAR
3 MEMENTO MORI
4 LAST SAMURAI

**Emperor** (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 LORD OF THE RING
2 KISKISAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

julia roberts
mona lisa smile

NOW SHOWING

**GAME OF LOVE**
Fiery diva Bituin Escalante and acoustic phenomenon Paolo Santos will be playing the game of love on the stage of Music Museum tomorrow. Together with acoustic jive, Bituin and Paolo will be making beautiful music in this pre-Valentine concert titled "The Game of Love." This unique combination of vocal power and soft melodies is a one-night engagement only.

## Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

### ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

| | |
|---|---|
| Ali 1 | SKY OF LOVE |
| Ali 2 | LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING |
| Ali 3 | MONA LISA SMILE |
| Ali 4 | IN THE CUT |
| Ali 5 | LAST SAMURAI |
| Ali 6 | KILL BILL |
| Ali 7 | THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE |

### NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL
NOW OPEN 4 PM to 10 PM daily

### ARANETA COLISEUM

| | |
|---|---|
| FEB 13 | OGIE & REGINE CONCERT |
| FEB 14 | JOHN FORD COLEY CONCERT |
| FEB 15 | OGIE & REGINE CONCERT |
| FEB 16 | NCA 7-COCK DERBY |
| FEB 18 | NCA 7-COCK DERBY |
| FEB 22 | PBA FIESTA CUP OPENING |
| FEB 25 | PBA GAMES |

FOR TICKETS, CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

## THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

### MANILA

| | |
|---|---|
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | CLOSED |
| MIRAMAR | SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA |
| ODEON | X-MEN 2 |
| ODEON-2 | BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN |
| ROBEN | BOLD STAR |
| TANDEM-1 | SUGAT |
| TANDEM-2 | KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO |
| TIMES | SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE |

### QUEZON CITY

| | |
|---|---|
| ACT-1 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| ACT-2 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| ACT-3 | ORIGINAL SIN |
| ACT-4 | HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY |
| CORONET A | BAKAT / DOUBLE SEDUCTION |
| CORONET B | A MAN APART |
| QUEZON-1 | BERTUD NG PUTIK |
| REMAR | X-MEN 2 |
| REMAR-2 | BOLD STAR |

### NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

| | |
|---|---|
| A | SEX SCANDAL |
| B | LORD OF THE RINGS |
| C | |

### MANDALUYONG CITY

| | |
|---|---|
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |

### CAINTA RIZAL

| | |
|---|---|
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-6401 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | KILL BILL |
| CINEMA-2 | PURI |
| CINEMA-3 | MALIKMATA |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | LAST SAMURAI |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | CAPTAIN BARBELL |
| CINEMA-6 | MALIKMATA |
| CINEMA-7 | MEMENTO MORI |
| CINEMA-8 | TWINS EFFECT |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | LAST SAMURAI |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | BROTHER BEAR |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | STUCK ON YOU |
| CINEMA-12 | LOTR 3. RETURN OF THE KING |
| CINEMA-14 | A TALE OF TWO SISTERS |
| CINEMA-15 | DIABLO |

### LORES

| | |
|---|---|
| CINEMA-2 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-3 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |

### NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

| | |
|---|---|
| (LAS PIÑAS) | LORD OF THE RINGS 3 |
| CINEMA-1 | KILL BILL |
| CINEMA-2 | BANGKOK HAUNTED |
| CINEMA-4 | CABIN FEVER |

### UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

| | |
|---|---|
| (PARAÑAQUE) | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-1 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| CINEMA-2 | MEN IN BLACK II |
| CINEMA-4 | SELDA |

## NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 | Strictly for ADULTS. No one below 18 yrs. old may be admitted

Based on the bestselling novel by SUSANNA MOORE

"An erotic thriller capable of inducing nightmares and guaranteed to shock even hard boiled audiences."
-The Miami Herald

A serial killer who cannot be caught.
A woman who knows too much.
A detective who hides a secret.

MEG RYAN MARK RUFFALO
KEVIN BACON
JENNIFER JASON LEIGH

IN THE CUT

A film by Jane Campion

MTRCB RATING ▶ G ALL AGES ADMITTED

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SMART PLDT bench/

## THEATRE MALL
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 IN THE CUT
12:25, 3:10, 5:55, 8:40
R18

CINEMA 2 MONALISA SMILE
11:05, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

### MUSIC MUSEUM

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| FEB 11 | "Game of Love" (Paolo Santos & Bituin Escalante) | 9:00PM |
| FEB 12 & 13 | "VOTE 1 TAKE ALL" (Willie Nep 4 President) | 9:00PM |

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

## EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
*For inquiries, call:*
687-6963 • 687-6972
RESERVED SEATING
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

1 RUNAWAY JURY
11:30, 2:20, 5:10, 8:00, 10:50

2 MONA LISA SMILE
11:40, 2:30, 5:20, 8:10, 10:50
PG-13

3 BROTHER BEAR
11:45, 1:45, 3:45
5:45, 7:45, 9:45
GP

4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:45
PG-18

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MOVIEWORLD
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## NOW SHOWING

### GALLERIA
632-9115 to 16 / 687-0593

CINEMA 1 THX
MONA LISA SMILE
12:50, 3:40, 6:30, 9:20

2 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 DOLBY DIGITAL

3 THE LAST SAMURAI
10:40, 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 DTS

4 IN THE CUT
11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:10, 10:00

5 MONA LISA SMILE
10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

6 LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
10:20, 2:05, 5:55, 9:45

7 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

8 STUCK ON YOU
11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50 DOLBY

9 BROTHER BEAR
11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40

10 RUNAWAY JURY SNEAK PREVIEW

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P75 for one level cinemas

### ERMITA
526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

DOLBY DIGITAL EX

1 MONA LISA SMILE
11:10, 1:45, 4:20, 6:55, 9:40

2 THE LAST SAMURAI
10:10, 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00 DOLBY

3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50 DOLBY

4 RUNAWAY JURY SNEAK PREVIEW

5 STUCK ON YOU
10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50 DOLBY

6 IN THE CUT
11:15, 1:25, 3:40, 5:55, 8:05, 10:00 SDDS

7 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40

### Big R Supercenter METRO EAST
682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1 THE LAST SAMURAI
11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 9:00 DOLBY

2 IN THE CUT
10:05, 12:50, 3:35, 6:20, 9:05 SDDS

3 MONA LISA SMILE
10:05, 12:50, 3:35, 6:20, 9:05 DOLBY

4 STUCK ON YOU
11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00 DOLBY DIGITAL

5 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00

6 RUNAWAY JURY SNEAK PREVIEW DOLBY

7 BROTHER BEAR
10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00 DTS

8 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00

### Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW
935-3229 / 31

1 THE LAST SAMURAI
10:40, 12:05, 2:50, 5:35, 8:80 DOLBY DIGITAL

2 MONA LISA SMILE
11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30 DOLBY

3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
10:30, 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:00 DOLBY

4 STUCK ON YOU
10:30, 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:00 DOLBY

5 BROTHER BEAR
11:20, 1:05, 2:50, 4:35, 6:20, 8:10

6 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30

7 IN THE CUT
11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30 DOLBY

8 RUNAWAY JURY SNEAK PREVIEW

### Citisquare MALABON
288-0985/2575

1 MAPUSOK
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 THE LAST SAMURAI
4 MONA LISA SMILE

### big Supercenter CAINTA
240-4661

1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 MONA LISA SMILE
3 BROTHER BEAR
4 THE LAST SAMURAI

### Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA
Laguna (049)837-0907

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 THE TWINS EFFECT
3 PURI
4 DIABLO
5 THE LAST SAMURAI

### Big R Supercenter LIPA
757-3664 / 312-5870

1 THE LAST SAMURAI
2 BROTHER BEAR
3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4 BROTHER BEAR
5 PURI

### Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS
852-2125

1 PURI
2 THE LAST SAMURAI
3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4 STUCK ON YOU
5 BROTHER BEAR

### Big R Supercenter STARMILLS
875-1927 / 961-5270

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 PURI
3 HAUNTED OFFICE
4 DIABLO
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 THE LAST SAMURAI

### IMUS
471-8188 / 875-5858

1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 THE LAST SAMURAI
3 STUCK ON YOU
4 DTS MONA LISA SMILE
5 DIABLO
6 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS

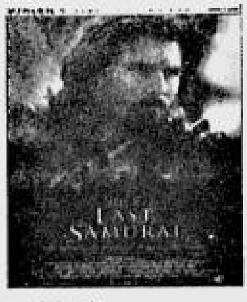
### BACOLOD
441-0458/59

1 MYSTIC RIVER
2 THE LAST SAMURAI
3 BRIDAL SHOWER
4 LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
6 KILL BILL

### ILOILO
336-8070/78

1 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
2 SKY OF LOVE
3 THE LAST SAMURAI
4 KILL BILL
5 PURI
6 THE TWINS EFFECT

STUCK ON YOU



NOW SHOWING at Robinsons Movieworld Cinemas

## ADVANCE SCREENING
* HAUNTED MANSION*
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA Cinema 2

* CHASING LIBERTY*
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA Cinema 6

February 9, 2004 (Monday) 7:30 PM
This screening is STRICTLY INVITATIONAL

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

# Passion of love making explored in 'Milan'

**By Leah C. Salterio**
*Contributor*

DIRECTOR Olive Lamasan wanted to show more skin in Star Cinema's "Milan," where Claudine Barretto and Piolo Pascual get naked.

This is one thing Lamasan has not yet tackled in her numerous films, the director said. She finally did it in "Milan," the story of a man's search for his lost love and of finding himself in the process, where she explores the passion of love making.

"It was my first time to do a love scene showing flesh," she says. "I wanted to capture a love scene that was pure and passionate and that was what we achieved in 'Milan.'"

For a reluctant director who had no formal education in filmmaking, Olive has charted a track record at the box office, which other filmmakers would probably take a lifetime to achieve.

In the decade that she has churned out films, Olive had also collected critical acclaim for "Madrasta" starring Sharon Cuneta and Christopher de Leon, "Maalaala Mo Kaya" with Aiko Melendez, "Sana Maulit Muli" with Lea Salonga and Aga Muhlach, and "Minsan Minahal Kita," with Sharon Cuneta and Richard Gomez.

But she singles out "Milan" as her most favorite film so far.

"After seeing 'Milan,' I can really choose one film I did that I really liked," Olive says. "Before, all my films were the same, but 'Milan' is different. The movie is very personal to me. I never felt God's presence in my life as much as when I was doing this film."

The movie, which opens in theaters on Wednesday, was mostly shot in Milan, Venice and other Italian cities where Filipino Overseas Workers converge.

"Milan is basically a man's search for himself," Olive says. "I have reached a point in my life where I question why I am here for or what's my purpose in life. All these questions, I dealt with while making this film."

She explains her choice of Milan as the movie's setting: "Milan was the idea of Malou Santos, who is the visionary of Star Cinema. It was logical that we did a movie there because ABS-CBN's base of The Filipino Channel (TFC) in Europe is in Milan."

Olive didn't want to compromise her latest work with a limited budget and asked her producers for at least P30 million, the director reveals.

"I told the people at Star Cinema that the film should roll on a budget of P30 million. If they lowered it, I could not do it anymore. Thankfully, they relented."

Olive is pleased she had the chance to work with two of the most bankable and talented young stars in local show biz today. She says Piolo and Claudine are two of the talents she is most comfortable working with.

"Sometimes, I just had to look at them in the eye and they already knew what to do," she says of her lead stars. "We all had fun doing this film."

**DIRECTOR** Olive Lamasan combines critical acclaim with box-office success.

**HEARTFELT VALENTINE**
**A CONCERT**
on Valentine's Day at the Century Park Sheraton will feature (L-R) Lance Raymundo, Ivy Violan, Jinky Llamanzares, George Tagle and Dulce (Aria, Kaye Dacer/ not it photo). "Heartfelt" is directed by Angie Magbanua. Tickets at P2,000 (with pre-show cocktails). Call 528-5871 to 73.

SUPER FUN, SUPER SPOOKY THRILL RIDE ! **OPENS TOMORROW !**
MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED

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POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**<br>**R18**<br>12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30 | **RUNAWAY JURY**<br>**R13**<br>12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:00 | **MONA LISA SMILE**<br>**PG13**<br>12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:20 |
| **IN THE CUT**<br>**R18**<br>1:50, 4:20, 6:50, 9:20 | **THE LAST SAMURAI**<br>**PG13**<br>12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50 | **BROTHER BEAR**<br>**GP**<br>1:00, 3:00 |

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

OPENS FEBRUARY 11 !
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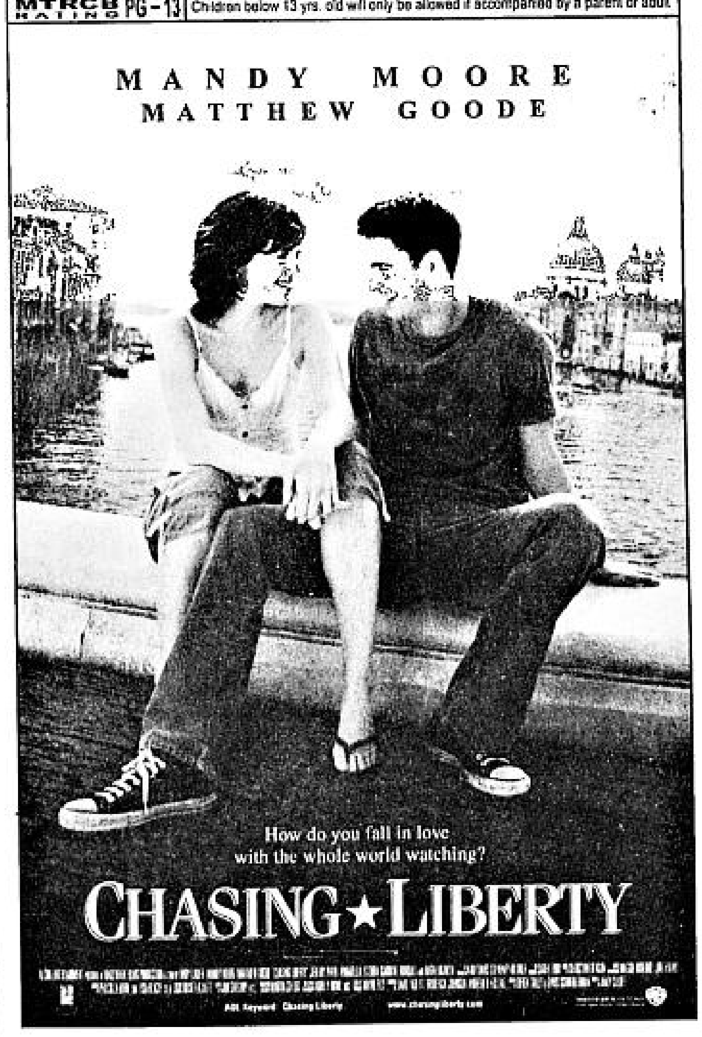
MANDY MOORE
MATTHEW GOODE


How do you fall in love
with the whole world watching?
CHASING★LIBERTY

# Wacky sexiest link

GISELLE Sanchez describes herself as the mild female counterpart of the ribald Rico J. Puno. Mild, because her punch lines are not as explicit as that of Rico J's ("I can't bring myself to do it!"); not as blatant and in-your-face as his jokes.

Giselle would rather make her audience test the limits of their imagination. Spelling it all out for them would spoil the fun, says Giselle. She thinks that making people figure things out for themselves means winning half the battle. They can turn the joke around, reinvent it, even pass it on as text messages. Just as important, Giselle says, children (horrors!) might be in the audience.

"I recognize some of my jokes in those text messages," Giselle says during an intimate presscon for her comedy concert, The Sexiest Link at Casino Filipino Parañaque on April 17, 9 p.m.

The wit, the sense of humor are inherent in Giselle. But it is also the product of research in joke books, which she devours with a passion, and in drinking session with the boys.

OPENS FEBRUARY 18
THE MOST TALK-ABOUT MOVIE OF THE YEAR
ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS
BEST ACTOR BENICIO DEL TORO
BEST ACTRESS NAOMI WATTS

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
2003 Venice International Film Festival

WINNER
BEST FILM OF THE YEAR
BEST ACTOR
2003 National Board of Review

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Online Film Critics Society

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Los Angeles Film Critics Association

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Chicago Movie Critics

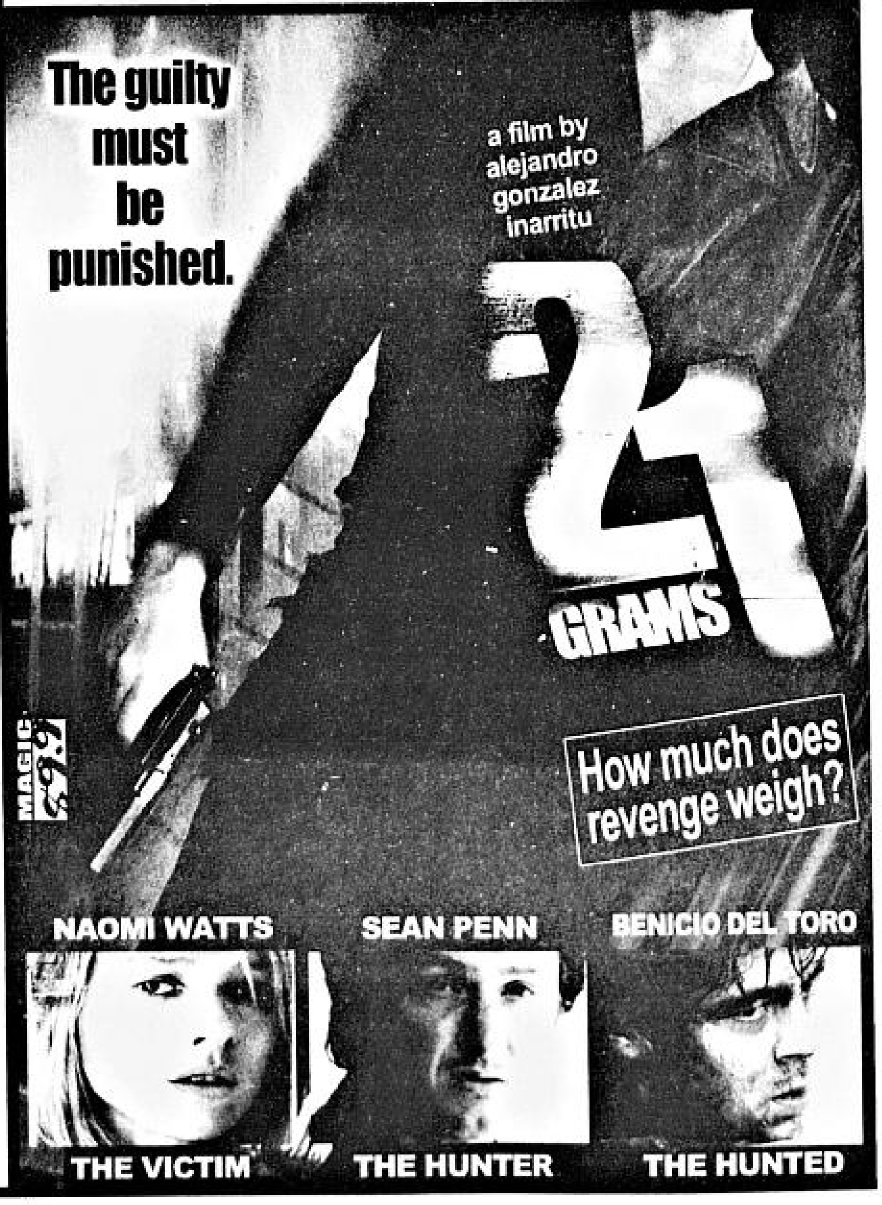
WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 San Diego Film Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Southeastern Film Critics

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
2003 NY Online Film Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Florida Film Critics

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
BEST ACTRESS
2003 Washington DC Film Critics


The guilty must be punished.
a film by alejandro gonzalez inarritu
21 GRAMS
MAGIC 89.9
How much does revenge weigh?
NAOMI WATTS
SEAN PENN
BENICIO DEL TORO
THE VICTIM
THE HUNTER
THE HUNTED

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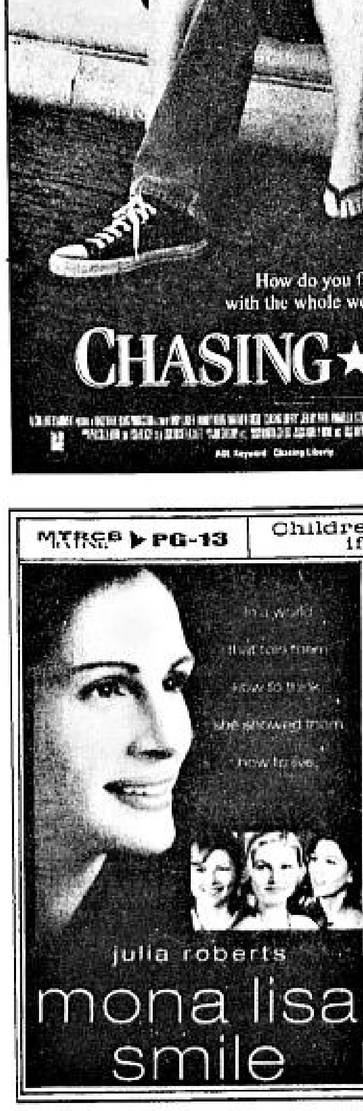
In a world that told them how to think, she showed them how to live.
julia roberts
mona lisa smile

**Julia Roberts dazzles in 'Mona Lisa Smile'**

Ladies, give yourselves a special treat, and bring your sisters, classmates, girlfriends, Mom, or even a date, to see Julia's new movie.

Academy Award®-winner Julia Roberts heads a powerhouse cast with today's hot young Hollywood actresses - Kirsten Dunst (*Spider-Man*) and Julia Stiles (*Save the Last Dance, 10 Things I Hate About You*) - in an uplifting, heart-wrenching, and often-times funny drama.

Julia Roberts stars as Katherine, a teacher who challenges her bright female students, and discovers herself along the way.

Mike Newell, director of romantic comedy *Four Weddings & a Funeral*, megs a must-see movie to capture your heart and put a smile on your face.

**Warming hearts at a theatre near you**
**NOW SHOWING**

# Martin's Vegas gamble pays off

## DOLLY WOOD

*Dolly Ann Carvajal*

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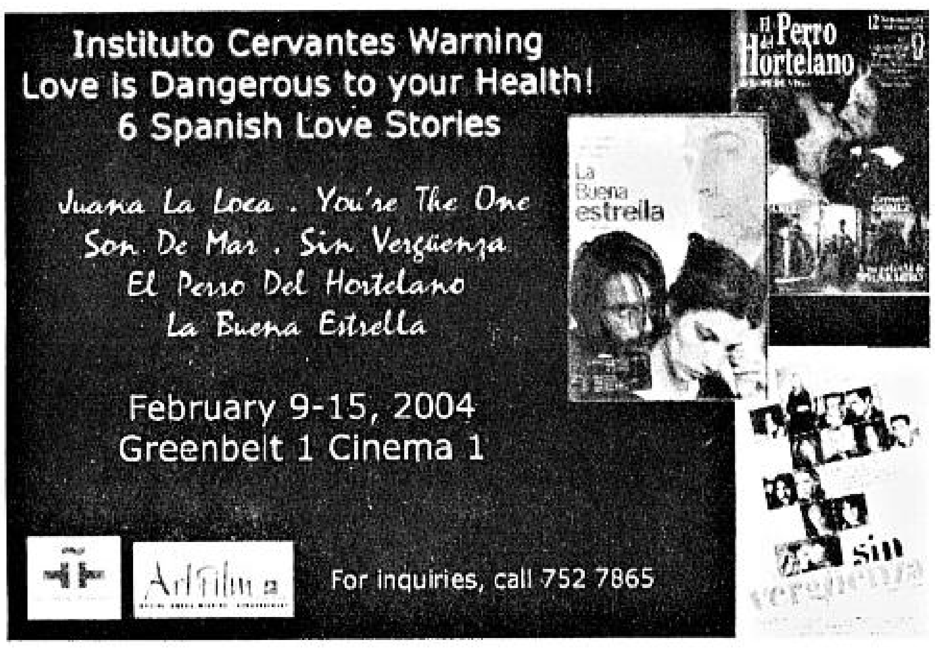

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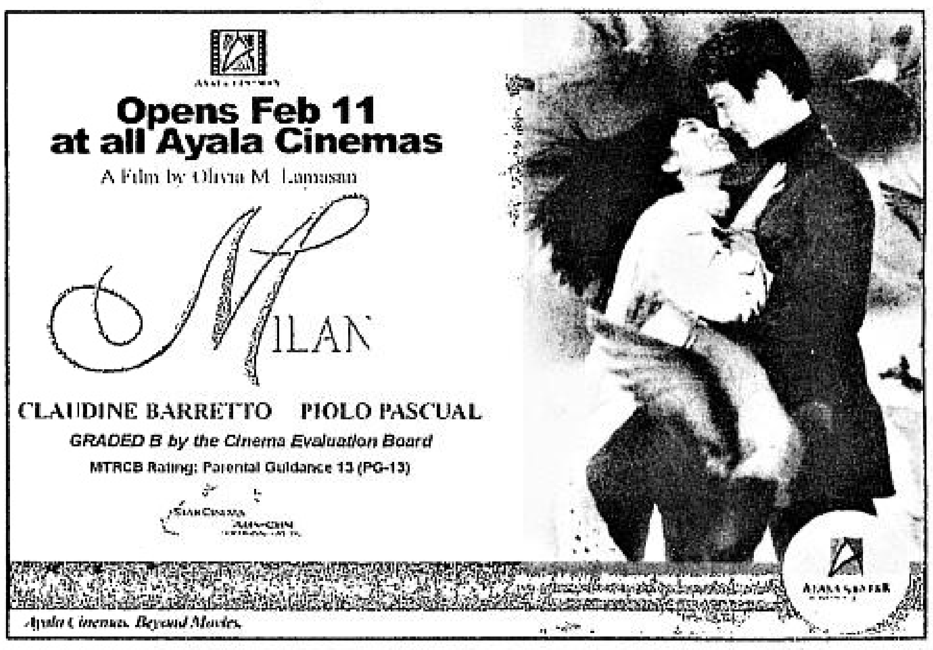
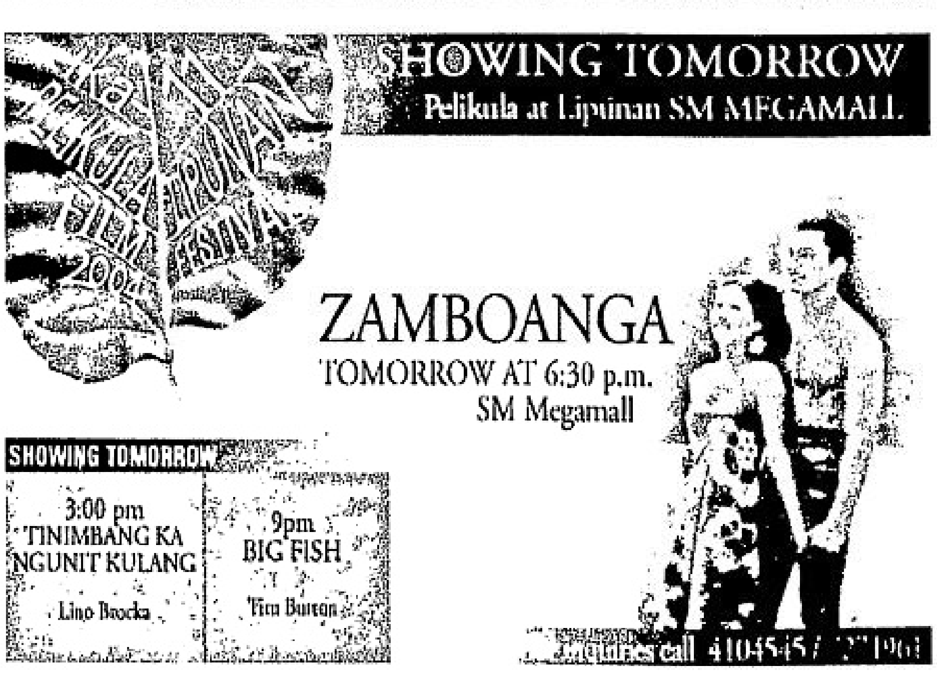


Opens Feb 11
at all Ayala Cinemas
A Film by Olivia M. Lamasan

MILAN

CLAUDINE BARRETTO PIOLO PASCUAL
GRADED B by the Cinema Evaluation Board
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

Ayala Cinemas. Beyond Movies.



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Pelikula at Lipunan SM MEGAMALL

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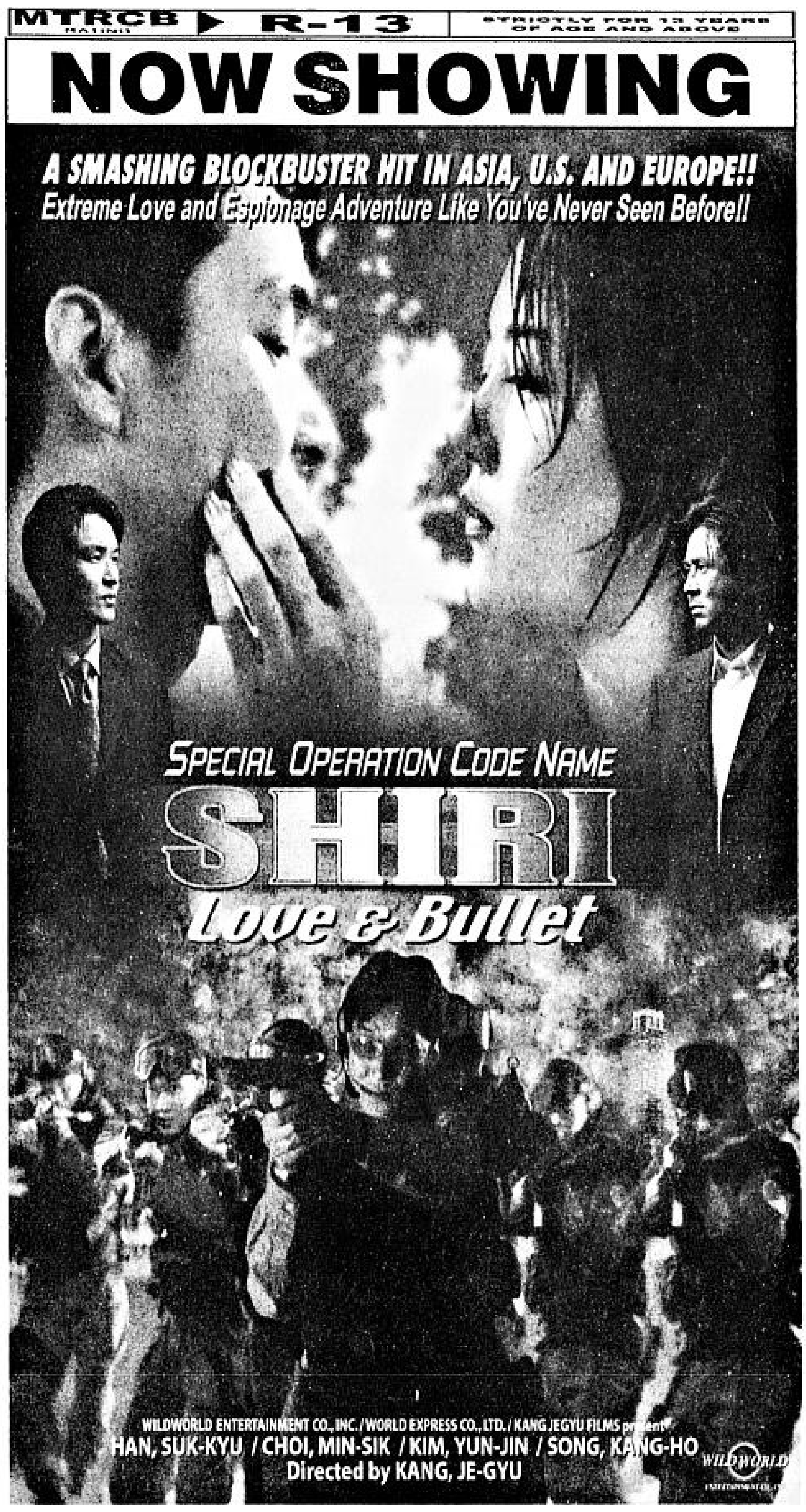

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Presented by Cinema Service | Produced by Cine 2000
CINE2000
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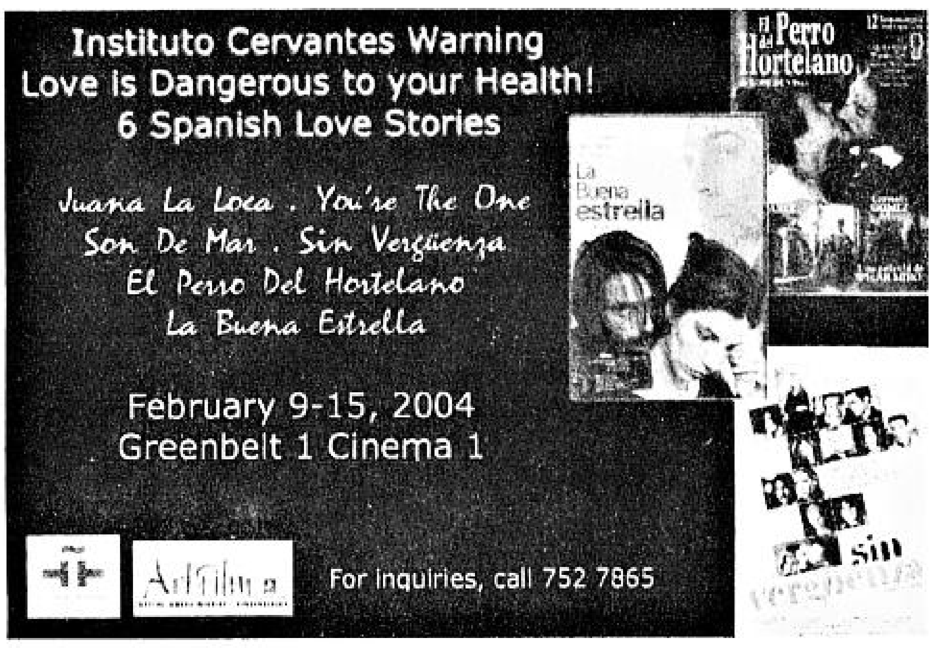

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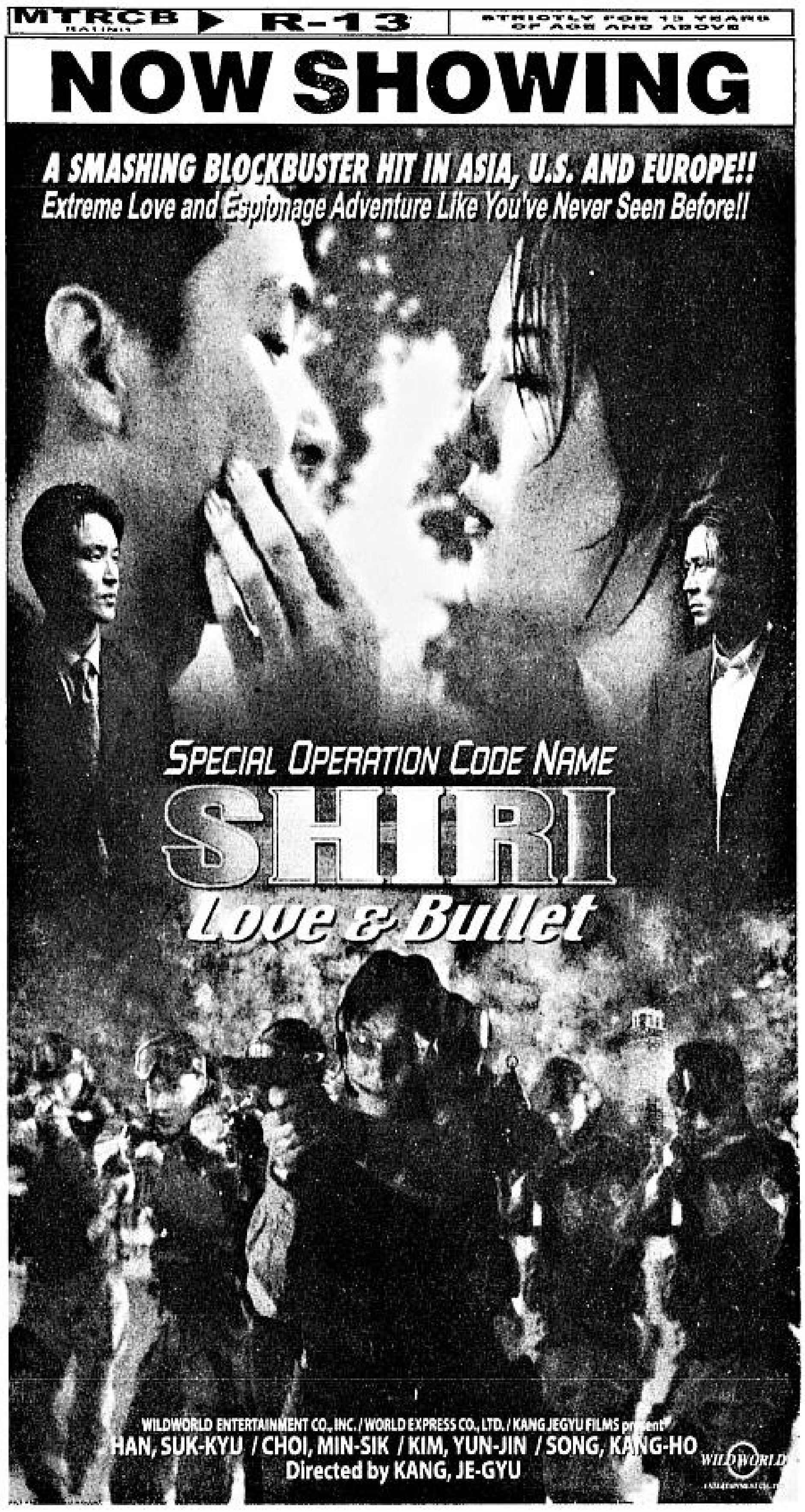

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# ENTERTAINMENT

# Janet Jackson Super Bowl stunt dominates Grammys

PRINCE (right) and Beyonce (left) perform the opening act of the 46th Annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. AFP

LOS ANGELES—"Breast-barer" Justin Timberlake apologized, soul siren Beyonce Knowles grabbed a slice of history, and rap duo Outkast won the coveted Album of the Year trophy at the 46th annual Grammy Awards here Sunday.

Timberlake went home with two awards, but it was his acceptance speech, rather than his music, that focused the audience's attention at the star-studded ceremony at Los Angeles' Staples Center.

"Listen, I know its been a rough week on everybody," Timberlake said, referring to the scandal that erupted after the Feb. 1 Super Bowl halftime show, when he ripped a section off Janet Jackson's bodice, exposing her right breast to 100 million primetime viewers.

Dressed down in a sombre suit and tie and pointedly sporting his mother as his date, Timberlake continued to insist that the entire incident was unplanned.

## Unplanned

"What occurred was unintentional, completely regrettable and I apologize if you guys were offended," he said.

The now infamous Super Bowl flash shadowed Sunday's ceremony, with the CBS network broadcasting the show with a short time delay to avoid any similar antics.

Jackson had been slated to appear as a presenter, but was forced to pull out.

"It was an unfortunate incident ... but we are here for the music," Recording Academy president Neil Portnow said backstage after the show. "I wish it didn't happen. We shouldn't have controversy."

JUSTINE Timberlake apologizes for Super Bowl incident.

Beyonce, who opened the night performing a medley of hits with superstar Prince, cemented her solo career away from Destiny's Child by taking home five Grammys, tying the record for a female artist held by Lauryn Hill, Alicia Keys and Norah Jones.

"Wow. This is unbelievable," the 22-year soul queen said as she accepted the Best Contemporary Rhythm and Blues Album award for her debut solo album "Dangerously In Love."

"Performing was enough for me. I'm just so honored," she said thanking her rapper boyfriend and collaborator Jay-Z.

Beyonce's single, "Crazy in Love," featuring Jay-Z, won both artists two Grammys each for Best Rap/Sung Collaboration and Best Rhythm and Blues Song.

She also won Best Female Rhythm and Blues Performance for "Dangerously in Love," and best Rhythm and Blues Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals for "The Closer I Get To You," with Luther Vandross.

Vandross, who is still recovering from a stroke he suffered last year and was unable to attend the ceremony, got a get-well boost by winning four awards, including Song of the Year, Best Rhythm and Blues Album and Best Male Rhythm and Blues Vocal Performance for "Dance with My Father."

"I want to thank my friends, family and fans for the outpouring of love, prayers and support I have received," he said in a written statement.

Along with Album of the Year, Outkast took home Best Rap Album for "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below," and also won Best Urban/Alternative Performance for "Hey Ya!."

## Beatles widows

Among the night's top awards, Record of the Year went to British band Coldplay for "Clocks," while Goth-Rock outfit Evanescence took Best New Artist.

Other multiple winners included bluegrass singer Alison Krauss who stole three Grammys, and rapper Eminem who won Best Rap Song and also Best Male Rap Solo Performance for his single "Lose Yourself."

BEST Female Pop Vocalist Christina Aguilera makes a crack at Jackson's flash. AP

The Janet Jackson incident was a recurring theme of acceptance speeches throughout the evening.

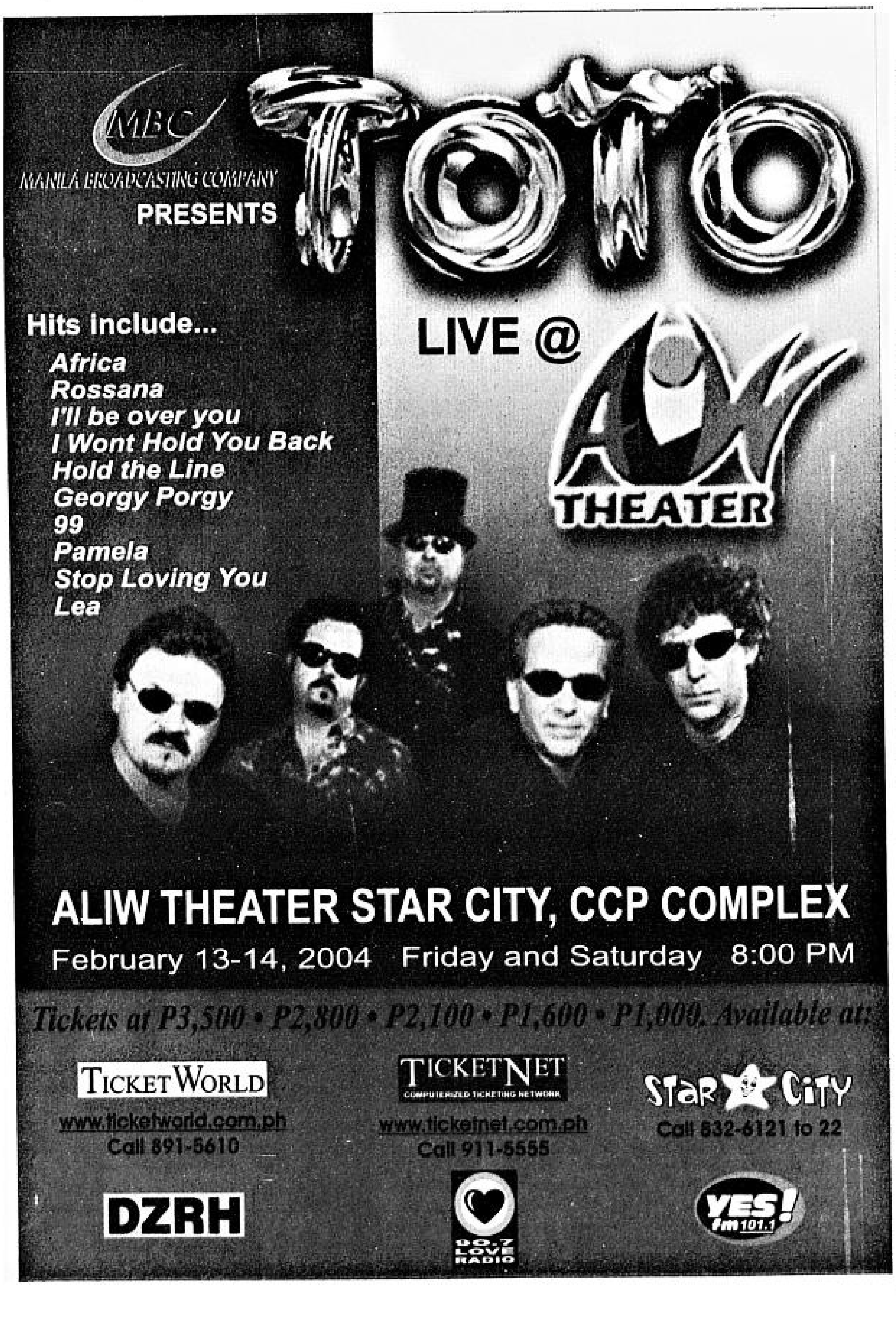
"I don't want to have the same thing happen that Janet had done," said teen idol Christina Aguilera, glancing down at her plunging neckline as she received her Grammy for Best Female Pop Vocalist.

Forming probably the most unlikely trio of award winners in Grammy history were former US president Bill Clinton, ex-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and actress Sophia Loren.

All three shared the award for Best Spoken Word Album for Children, having lent their voices to the Russian folk tale of "Peter and the Wolf."

Beatles widows Yoko Ono and Olivia Harrison accepted a special Grammy on behalf of the Fab Four to mark the 40th anniversary of their explosion onto the US music scene.

A tearful Ono, 70, said if John Lennon were still alive he would: "Say it again, 'come together, give peace a chance and love is all we need.'" *AP*



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I Wont Hold You Back
Hold the Line
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Pamela
Stop Loving You
Lea
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Tickets at P3,500 • P2,800 • P2,100 • P1,600 • P1,000. Available at:
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90.7 LOVE RADIO
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# Bracing change

### VIEWFINDER

*Nestor U. Torre*

MOST of the foreign feature films that reach our movie screens are Hollywood products. Little by little, however, our film culture is opening up to movies from Europe, a bracing change that is adding another dimension to our appreciation of what the cinema can do.

This month, one such movie is starting its run on a few local screens: **Ole Bornedal's** "I Am Dina" stars **Maria Bonnevie** as a young woman who bears a terrible burden from her childhood: She accidentally killed her mother, and was disowned by her father.

The film's central conflict is so arresting that the production was hailed as Best Picture in the World Film Festival in Montreal, Canada, and Bonnevie romped off with the Best Actress trophy.

How does Dina come to terms with her awesome trauma? With great difficulty—and determination.

Help first comes in her father's friend, Jacob (**Gerard Depardieu**), who sees her sorry state and feels compelled to redeem her. He hires a tutor who succeeds in helping Dina gradually come out of her shell. Unfortunately, her relationship with her father remains cold and bitter.

In time, Jacob falls in love with Dina. Despite the disparity in their ages, Dina's father forces her to marry Jacob, and she moves in with his family.

But the trauma of her past continues to haunt Dina, so happiness eludes her, despite her giving birth to a baby boy. It is only when she meets the enigmatic Leo (**Christopher Eccleston**) that she finds real reason to live.

## 'Stuck on You'

CINEMA (Catholic Initiative for Enlightened Movie Appreciation) gives the film "Stuck on You" this evaluation: acceptable for moral assessment, and slightly above average for technical assessment.

"This heartwarming comedy is more funny than naughty. Viewers expecting gross or toilet humor will be disappointed. **Matt Damon** and **Greg Kinnear** deliver terrific performances as extremely opposite twins.

"Cher wittily spoofs herself as a spoiled diva. Comedy meets melodrama as 'Stuck on You' successfully blends humor, romance and the fraternal drama of conjoined brothers.

"God works in mysterious ways, and we sometimes have to look even at our misfortunes as blessings in disguise. The movie's conjoined twins manage to turn their scars into stars despite being physically challenged. The movie also tells us that we shouldn't look at people with physical defects as freaks."

## Feedback

FROM **Teresita Aguinaldo** of Manila: "Thank you for speaking out against major channels' noontime TV shows that have loudmouth hosts who insult female dancers and participants. I used to enjoy the show's merriment until it got too offensive. I appeal to advertisers to be more judicious about supporting offensive programs.

"Other stations sometimes offer better programs, but they don't have as many viewers. Perhaps, with the help of responsible journalists like you, more people can come to know that there are alternative noontime shows.

"For instance, Channel 13 telecasts educational programs on the environment. And 'Dee's Day' is a decent, informative and pleasant show with interesting guests.

"Anyway, please continue to be vigilant against excessively sexy shows that put down women. I pity those who must wear indecent dresses just to appear on noontime shows.

'And, by the way, the new 'Game Ka Na Ba?' is offensive to my taste. We aren't Americans who must do crazy things for a TV show. The old format was better—why did they change it?"

## 'Wild Tech'

BEGINNING Feb. 10, the Discovery Channel presents "Wild Tech," a unique series that compares technology's achievements to similar phenomena that occur in the animal world.

The series explores the technologies that humans have developed and the attributes that animals have adapted over millennia that provide the same functions. Airing as part of Tech Tuesday, "Wild Tech" telecasts on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

On Feb. 10, the episode focuses on builders. With the planet's rapidly growing population, technology must use existing space to build giant buildings, labyrinths and super ships, all designed to pack more people into less space.

Nature's super colonists already have their own strategies, from blind termites building towers thousands of times their own height with nothing more than chemical signals, to prairie dogs digging out underground "towns" for millions.

On Feb. 17, the focus is on communication—the backbone of every animal's existence. Nature has developed a range of secret communications, which have become great learning tools for humans. For instance, elephants can hear sounds from kilometers away, and ants communicate using smell. *(To be concluded.)*

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B1

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*Editor* Raul O. Marcelo
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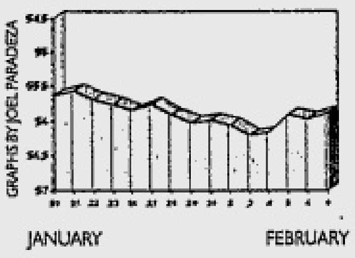
# BSP fines 3 banks for forex violation

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**

₱ 55.87 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2004

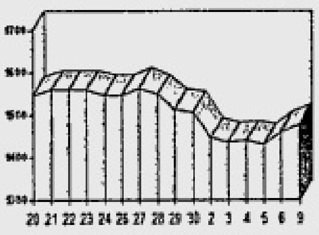
¥ 105.55 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2004

GOLD: $405.50-406.00

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2004

### Stocks end up



(See stock market report on Page B7)

STOCKS gained more than one percent yesterday, led by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Globe Telecom Inc., as investors scoured for bargains.

Traders said players also snapped up companies scheduled to report 2003 earnings in the next two weeks.

"There is still room for bargain hunting as I expect resistance at the 1,500 level," said Jose Vistan, analyst at AB Capital Securities Inc.

The 33-share composite index ended 1.15 percent or 16.82 points higher at 1,478.35 points after rising 2 percent on Friday.

Traders said buyers emerged in the last two sessions after the steep drop of the main index last week.

On Feb. 2, the main index fell 4 percent—its biggest single-day loss in more than two years—due to mounting political uncertainty ahead of the country's election on May 10.

In the broader market yesterday, gainers overwhelmed losers 31 to 13, with 33 stocks unchanged. Turnover slipped to P856.06 million from Friday's P895.08 million.

PLDT, the country's biggest phone firm, rose 3.3 percent or P30 to P940. The company is due to report 2003 results on Thursday.

Its chief rival Globe, jointly owned by conglomerate Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications Ltd., gained 2.31 percent or P20 to P885.

Jollibee Foods Corp., the dominant fastfood chain in the country, ended unchanged at P18.75 after it said it bought a controlling stake in a holding firm that owns 77 restaurants in China.

Shares of the group, whose flagship hamburger outlets vastly outsell McDonald's Corp. in its home market, rose as much as 1.33 percent in earlier trade.

*Reuters*

---

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

**THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has fined three banks for violations of currency regulations and several lenders are under tight watch for irregular foreign exchange transactions starting last month.**

The central bank is continuously examining the banks' currency transactions to ensure that lenders are observing the BSP's numerous regulations on foreign exchange. Monitoring has become even stricter every time the peso depreciated against the dollar.

Over the last two weeks, the BSP had been closely watching banks' dollar transactions to ensure that these institutions were not instrumental in the peso's drop to a record low of 56.20 to $1 last Feb.3. Monetary tools were recently used to abate the peso's continued decline.

With threats of continued monitoring, moral suasion, and a possible overnight rate increase, the peso recovered to 55.87 to a dollar yesterday from 55.96 last Friday. Most regional currencies also went up.

Traders said the dollar was generally weak yesterday while the local market digested warnings from the BSP of strict monitoring and a potential rate increase if the peso weakness persisted. But the recovery was only temporary, according to traders, and by the end of the month, the peso could fall anew to the 56.20:$1 level.

JP Morgan Chase, ING Bank, and International Exchange Bank were penalized for violations of the the central bank's regulation on currency trading, booking and reporting.

Based on official documents, ING Bank was slapped the biggest penalty at P3.42 million followed by iBank with P930,000 and JP Morgan Chase with P90,000. But ING and iBank sought a reduction in the penalties to P330,000 and P155,000.

JP Morgan was penalized for selling foreign exchange to residents to pay obligations of another resident. Last year, the foreign bank was fined P1.5 million for more than 50 violations committed by Financial Marketing Services Corp., its defunct money-changing affiliate

Of the five questioned transactions of JP Morgan between March and April 2003, the BSP found 3 items to have violated Circular 1389, which restricts banks from selling dollars to residents for use to pay another resident.

JP Morgan Chase, in a letter to the BSP, justified that the foreign exchange transactions in question were either "travel related or reimbursement to a foreign consultant."

On ING Bank, the central bank questioned why the foreign lender had not transferred $51.2 million in previous years from the multi-currency subsidiary ledger to a domestic account. As a result, the bank exceeded the $5-million overbought limit imposed by the regulator.

ING sought a reconsideration of the P3.42 million penalty to P330,000. The bank said that the transfer of the previous years' profits was delayed because it was not able to readily secure a BSP approval to move the profits. The bank also said that such a transfer could weaken its case before the Court of Tax Appeals.

ING questioned a government decision to subject the foreign currency deposit unit to a branch profit remittance tax when it argued that this should be exempt from taxes.

iBank was slapped a penalty of

BSP/B7

# Filipinos are world's top gin drinkers

**By Abigail L. Ho**

FILIPINO gin drinkers catapulted local brand Ginebra San Miguel to the top position in terms of global gin sales at 27.4 million cases in 2002, edging out other popular brands as Beefeater and Gilbey's.

American alcoholic beverage research firm Impact Databank said in its December 2003 report that Ginebra remained the top gin brand in the world, fueled by strong overall gin consumption by Filipinos that year.

Local gin drinkers downed 27.92 million cases of gin in 2002, even more than the 26.98 million cases they drank the previous year.

They outpaced their American counterparts by more than 140 percent, who consumed 11.59 million cases of gin during the same period.

Spanish drinkers were a far third in terms of consumption at 3.99 million cases, followed by the United Kingdom's 2.8 million cases and India's 1.68 million cases.

As far as other gin brands were concerned, Ginebra toppled Diageo's Gordon's, which sold 5.2 million cases and Tanqueray at 2 million.

The local gin brand likewise outsold Pernod Richard's Seagram's at 3.2 million cases, as well as Allied Domecq Spirits & Wine's Beefeater at 2.3 million cases.

It also edged out other world-renowned gin brands including Pernod Richard's Larios, Bacardi Ltd.'s Bombay, Diageo's Gilbey's, McDowell & Co. Ltd.'s Blue Riband, and Heaven Hills Distillers Inc.'s Burnett's.

Ginebra San Miguel Inc. (GSMI), which produced the Ginebra brand under the San Miguel Corp. umbrella, registered a 6-percent increase in net sales and consolidated sales volume in 2003. Sales stood at P12 billion.

Exports surged 886 percent to 887,000 cases in 2003 from 90,000 cases the year before. Export volume growth was particularly pronounced in the second half of the year.

However, despite a surge in international demand and a steady growth in local gin consumption, GSMI posted a slight decline in net income at a little less than P1.65 billion in 2003 due to "difficult business conditions that affected Ginebra San Miguel Round sales in the last three quarters," a company disclosure stated.

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# Caught in the hack

**BREAKTIME**

*Conrado R. Banal III*

TODAY, as the frail peso slides down the tough road of the financial markets, let us take a look at the untold benefits of currency speculation—i.e. exchange rate gambling.

The Bangko Sentral, for one, is threatening to suspend any branch of any bank which, by some remote chance, it may accidentally catch doing … well, the "split."

In banking, the "split" brings about the same result as the similarly termed maneuver in gymnastics. Something suddenly hurts between your legs.

* * *

ANYWAY, it is also called the "split" in banking, because you basically split dollar transactions, as you split up with somebody else, to hit the public where it hurts the most.

The banks split the dollars between the actual buyer and themselves. The banks pretend that they sell dollars to the public, but they actually keep some for themselves.

The practice is also against Bangko Sentral rules. For the sake of a couple of candidates for Vice President, it simply means that the banks are cheating.

While the trick only involves small amounts, it is said to be a common day-to-day practice in banking at the branch level.

And so each transaction of $5,000, done 50,000 times, actually amounts to … let's see … well, that's really a lot of money!

* * *

THAT'S why the Bangko Sentral thinks it is one big reason for the massacre of the peso in the currency market. In effect, it creates an artificial demand for dollars.

In banking parlance, it is out-and-out currency speculation. Down here in our jueteng infested barangay, it is just pure and simple high-stakes gambling.

Unfortunately, it is not that easy to catch the "split" practitioners in the act. How many branches do banks have all over this archipelago of 7,100 islands again?

* * *

METHINKS the Bangko Sentral has better things to do than use its personnel to watch all of those thousands of branches for eight banking hours, five days a week.

Thus, the central bank is going to catch just a few. If your branch happens to be one of them, tough luck, Boy Bulak, because you are suspended for one week.

For the sake of a certain presidential candidate, the "med-reps" in the pharmaceutical industry have a colorful term for it—"sample only."

It is not just an empty threat from the Bangko Sentral. Straight from the horse's mouth, I heard that the authorities wanted to make an "example" out of some banks soon.

And so if the banks want to take the risk and still gamble on the exchange rate, it is up to them. But they better make sure they are not caught in the dollar hacking.

* * *

HOW come word persists in business circles that, actually, some self-proclaimed so-called "IT experts" were behind the recent Supreme Court ruling against the Comelec.

In effect, the ruling stopped the Comelec from using computers to count the votes in the next elections, by nullifying its supply contract with the Mega Pacific consortium.

Maybe it's because those, er, so-called "experts" were not doing well in their own businesses.

The business principals of one of them, I heard, and even the franchisees of his business, even threatened to file court cases against him.

* * *

THESE are the guys, in other words, if the rumors are to be believed, on which the Supreme Court relied heavily to make the decision.

The ruling indicated, in no uncertain terms, that the Comelec did not know what it was doing in the computerization project.

But as I said, a number of those behind the case were said to be in big trouble, financially, cash-strapped and all.

And so why would they spend time and resources on a case before the Supreme Court as if it was only civic mindedness, plus patriotic duty, which behooves them to move heaven and earth just to stop the Comelec project?

Methinks it was all about the money. And if it is about money, how can anybody trust them to say the honest truth about the project?

Even the computer experts from the academe (those from UP), who are the real ones, and not the poseurs, think that the Supreme Court got a lot of garbage from those behind-the-scene guys.

* * *

TODAY the top executives of the global company InterContinental Hotels Group are inaugurating a service center in the Philippines. It is the latest of the company's 15 service centers worldwide. As to why they chose the Philippines, I must try to find out later this afternoon. For once, it is something good about this country. The group happens to manage a number of hotel chains, such as the Intercontinental brand, Holiday Inn, Staybridge Suites, Crownplaza Hotel, and Candlewood Suites. The service center will take care of the needs of customers around the world. Thus it has something like 350 stations, manned by about 500 highly trained personnel. I like this group already.

## NEW FARE SCHEME

# LRT ridership hits 110M

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LIGHT Rail Transit Authority yesterday reported a passenger volume of 109.55 million passengers for its Line 1 and Line 2 railway systems in 2003.

Line 1, or the Yellow Line, generated a total ridership of 107.24 million passengers in 2003, slightly higher than the 107 million commuters it carried the year before.

Line 2, or the Purple Line, chipped in another 2.3 million passengers in the same period.

The 15-kilometer Yellow Line runs from Baclaran in Parañaque to Monumento in Caloocan.

The Purple Line, a 13.8-km system spanning Santolan in Pasig to Recto in Manila, has been running since April 2003. Right now, only the Santolan-Cubao stretch is operational. The whole line will be fully operational by the end of the year.

Despite the implementation of a new fare structure on Dec. 15, the LRTA said in a statement yesterday that ridership did not drop, particularly on the Monumento-Baclaran line where the new fare scheme was enforced.

The distance-based fare scheme scrapped the single-fare system that had been in place since the start of the Yellow Line's operations in 1984.

Under the new fare scheme, passengers pay a minimum fare of P12 and a maximum fare of P15, unlike the 19-year-old fare structure which had a flat rate of P12 for the whole line.

For the first four stations, a passenger will be charged P12. Passengers using the single journey or one-ride-only cards will have to pay P15 for all succeeding stations after the first four, while those using stored value cards will have fares that go up by P1 increments after every four stations.

If an LRT-1 passenger, for example, gets on the train at the Monumento station in Caloocan and gets off at Blumentritt station, or four stations after, he pays P12. If, however, he decides to get off at Tayuman station in Manila, or five stations after, he then has to pay P13.

For someone using a single journey card, getting on at the Monumento station and alighting at the Tayuman station will mean a P15 fare.

The new fare scheme likewise eliminates the P2 fare for passengers who get on the train at any of the last four stations at either end of the Monumento-to-Baclaran line.

LRTA planning manager Evangeline Razon said in an earlier interview that the new fare scheme was designed to allow the railway system to become more viable as well as give it additional cash to finance its operational as well as debt-servicing requirements.

She said the fare rationalization scheme would rake in an additional P185 million per year for the LRTA.

# Meralco gets authority to float bonds

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has given Manila Electric Co. the provisional authority to issue bonds worth up to $600 million to secure outstanding payments on unsecured loans.

In a seven-page decision docketed last Jan. 12, the ERC said it found it reasonable to allow Meralco "to have the flexibility to incur additional loans to ease its financial burden."

The five-member commission noted that the utility had not been able to comply with financial ratios required by some of its creditors:

Banco de Oro (BDO), Bank of the Philippine Islands and ING-Singapore require Meralco to maintain a current ratio of 1:1, but the actual ratio is 0.72:1;

BDO and BPI require the company to maintain a fixed charge of 3:1, but the actual figure is 1.98:1, and the Asian Development Bank requires an 8-percent return on fixed assets, when the actual rate is 6 percent.

In its decision, the regulator said Meralco had filed a petition last Sept. 5 asking for authority to raise up to $600 million that it would use to fund capital projects that would be implemented from 2004 to 2008; refinance all of its existing long-term unsecured debts; and convert existng unsecured debts to long-term secured debts.

Meralco said the amount would cover a total of $290 million in outstanding loan payments and $390 million more that it is allowed to borrow under an authority issued by the then Energy Regulatory Board in 2001.

During a hearing on Meralco's petition yesterday morning, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore) president Pete Ilagan asked the ERC to withdraw the provisional authority.

In a statement issued after the hearing, Ilagan said: "We should first see Meralco's feasibility studies on capital expenditures and expansion projects."

Meralco representatives asked the commission to suspend the hearings and give it one month to submit the documents in question.

"Why does it have to take one month? If Meralco really made such studies, it only takes to have them photocopied," Ilagan said.

Last month, short-term creditors granted Meralco a third extension of debts totaling $88 million.

Late in January, Meralco treasurer Rafael Andrada said the company expected to incur a deficit of $24 million in the first quarter if it failed to refinance outstanding long-term debt payments.

Meralco needs to service a total of P11 billion in long-term debt payments within this year.

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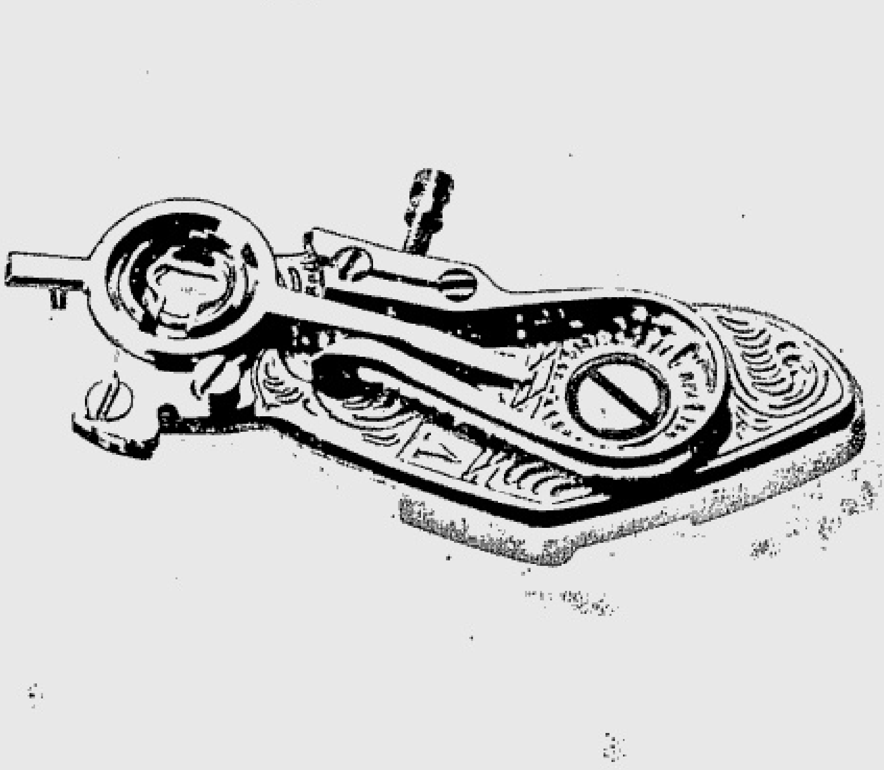

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# DENR studies viability of operating 22 mines

**By Christine A. Gaylican**

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources is looking into the possible rehabilitation of some 22 abandoned mines to help revitalize the country's dormant mining industry.

"The agency is implementing the rehabilitation program for abandoned as well as inactive mines in an effort to transform these into productive assets once again," said DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun in an interview yesterday.

Included in the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's list of abandoned and inactive mines are Acoje Mining Co. Inc.'s mine in Sta. Cruz, Zambales; Barlo Mining Corp.'s mine in Mabini, Pangasinan; Batong Buhay Gold Mines in Pasil, Kalinga; Benguet Corp.'s Antamok Mines in Benguet and its chromite mines in Masinloc, Zambales.

Also in the list are Benguet Exploration's mine in Tuba, Benguet; Black Mountain Inc.'s mine also in Benguet and Filminera Resources Corp.'s mines in Rosario and Bunawan, Agusan del Sur.

Gozun disclosed that the DENR has appointed consulting firm Tetra Tech EM Inc. to do the study.

Tetra Tech would take soil and water samples from these areas to look into the physical conditions of the mines and tailings dams.

She also said that the group would also assess the profitability of these inactive mines before operations are resumed.

Gozun stressed that local government units would be consulted before the mines resume operations.

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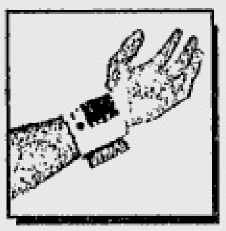

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# Cartoon firms new dollar earner

**By Michelle V. Remo**

THE LOCAL animation industry is positioning itself to become one of the country's major dollar earners.

Riding on the success of previous animation projects, the Animation Council of the Philippines said that it has come up with programs to entice local businessmen to invest in animation.

Acpi is also working at getting more foreign animation firms to outsource their production from the Philippines.

"We've spoken to prospective clients and investors, and the feeling is that Filipinos are more creative than foreign counterparts," said an industry official.

The Philippines has become one of the major service providers of outsourced animation production over the past two decades.

Unknown to many, Filipino animators were the outsourcing partners for foreign films like Scooby Doo, Tom & Jerry, Addams Family, Dragon Ball Z and Captain Planet.

Acpi president Marlyn Montano said animation could be a lucrative business.

Instead of spending dollars to acquire rights to air foreign cartoons, she said local firms could consider producing their own animation shows.

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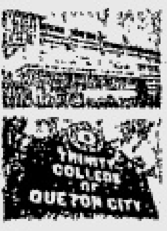

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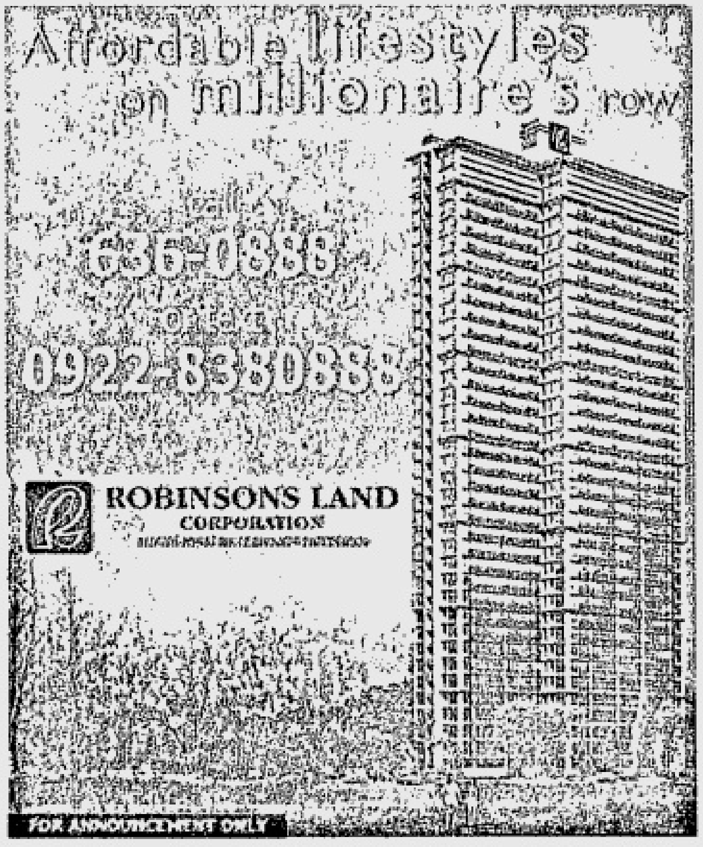

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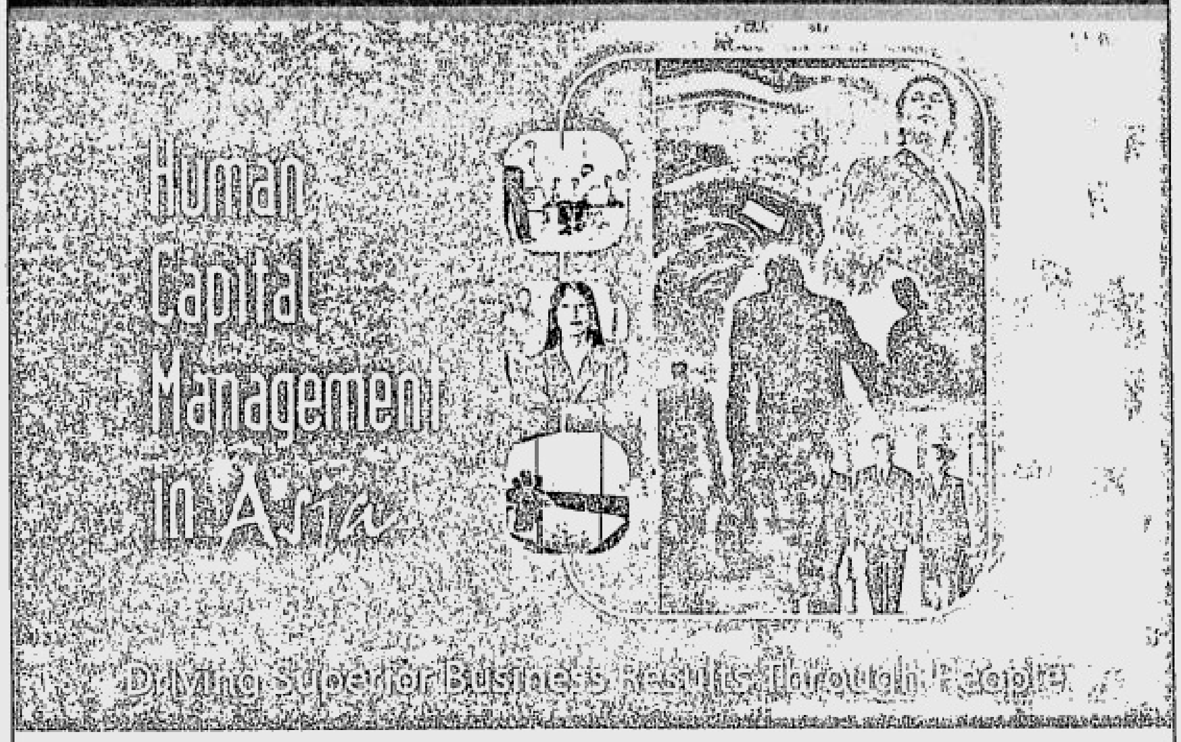

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# DENR studies viability of operating 22 mines

**By Christine A. Gaylican**

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources is looking into the possible rehabilitation of some 22 abandoned mines to help revitalize the country's dormant mining industry.

"The agency is implementing the rehabilitation program for abandoned as well as inactive mines in an effort to transform these into productive assets once again," said DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun in an interview yesterday.

Included in the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's list of abandoned and inactive mines are Acoje Mining Co. Inc.'s mine in Sta. Cruz, Zambales; Barlo Mining Corp.'s mine in Mabini, Pangasinan; Batong Buhay Gold Mines in Pasil, Kalinga; Benguet Corp.'s Antamok Mines in Benguet and its chromite mines in Masinloc, Zambales.

Also in the list are Benguet Exploration's mine in Tuba, Benguet; Black Mountain Inc.'s mine also in Benguet and Filminera Resources Corp.'s mines in Rosario and Bunawan, Agusan del Sur.

Gozun disclosed that the DENR has appointed consulting firm Tetra Tech EM Inc. to do the study.

Tetra Tech would take soil and water samples from these areas to look into the physical conditions of the mines and tailings dams.

She also said that the group would also assess the profitability of these inactive mines before operations are resumed.

Gozun stressed that local government units would be consulted before the mines resume operations.

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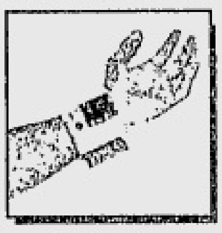
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# Cartoon firms new dollar earner

**By Michelle V. Remo**

THE LOCAL animation industry is positioning itself to become one of the country's major dollar earners.

Riding on the success of previous animation projects, the Animation Council of the Philippines said that it has come up with programs to entice local businessmen to invest in animation.

Acpi is also working at getting more foreign animation firms to outsource their production from the Philippines.

"We've spoken to prospective clients and investors, and the feeling is that Filipinos are more creative than foreign counterparts," said an industry official.

The Philippines has become one of the major service providers of outsourced animation production over the past two decades.

Unknown to many, Filipino animators were the outsourcing partners for foreign films like Scooby Doo, Tom & Jerry, Addams Family, Dragon Ball Z and Captain Planet.

Acpi president Marlyn Montano said animation could be a lucrative business.

Instead of spending dollars to acquire rights to air foreign cartoons, she said local firms could consider producing their own animation shows.

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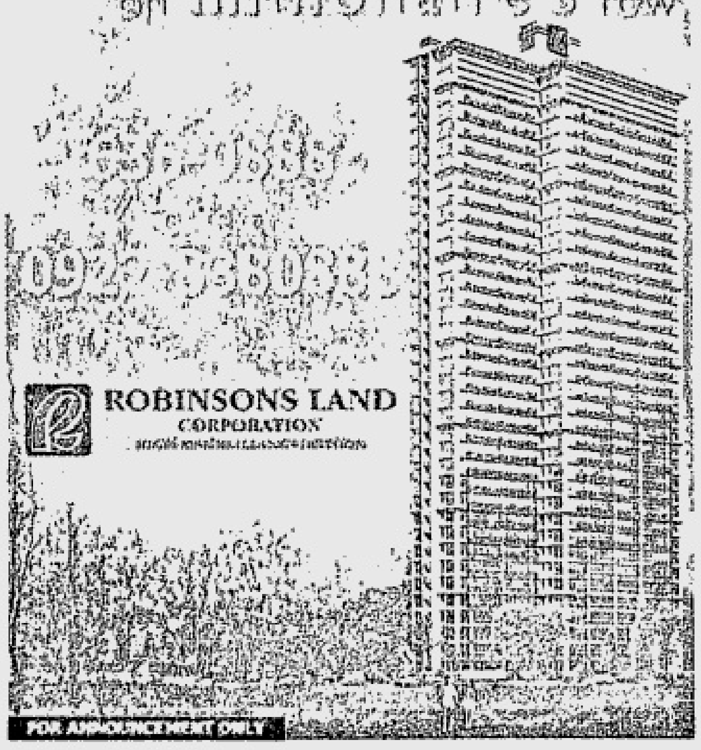

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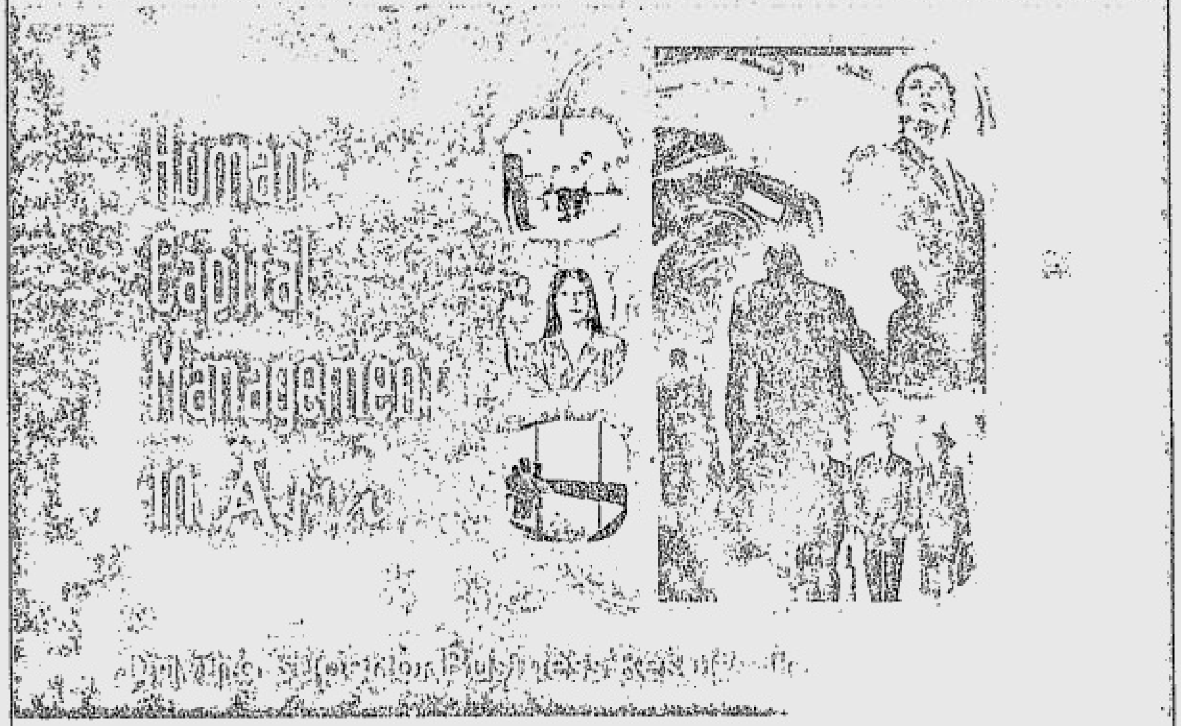
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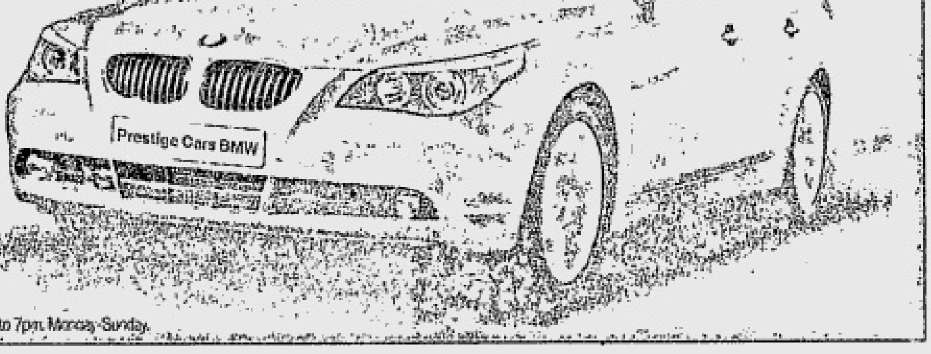

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# Power sector needs ₱633B to meet increasing demand

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**

GOVERNMENT estimates under the Power Development Plan 2004-2013 (PEP) show that P633.8 billion will be needed to put up additional power plant capacity and complementary transmission facilities to meet the rising electricity demand in the country in the next 10 years.

Of the amount, P462.2 billion would be earmarked for additional power generating capacity while P171.6 billion would be spent for transmission line and substation projects.

The PEP, which was launched last week, identified projects needed to enable the energy sector to meet the expected demand, estimated based on assumption that the economy would grow by 5.7 percent between 2004 and 2013. Over the same period, the country's population is seen to grow by 1.8 percent yearly.

Energy officials say the two assumptions point to an average yearly increase in electricity demand of 7.3 percent.

This means that the country's peak demand, the highest level of electricity requirement in a day, may reach 9,134 megawatts within the year from the current 8,509 MW.

Peak demand is seen to further go up to 17,241 MW by 2013.

Government data show that the country presently has a total installed capacity of 15,132 MW, but only 13,262 MW of which is considered dependable.

PEP projections indicate that 7,945 MW in additional capacity will have to be operational within a decade.

Of the total figure, 5,775 MW or 73 percent is needed in Luzon; 1,220 MW or 15 percent is needed in the Visayas, and 950 MW or 12 percent is needed in Mindanao.

Energy officials said that without the additional capacity, power shortages would be felt in Mindanao by 2005 and in Luzon and the Visayas by 2008.

In a related matter, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. told reporters in a briefing last month that the government was confident it could sell at least two of National Power Corp.'s power plants before the elections in May.

Perez told reporters that Napocor and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. were, in the meantime, finalizing transitional supply contracts (TSCs) before the power plants and various distribution utilities.

"We are awaiting the approved TSC form from the Energy Regulatory Commission. The TSC's are key for the faclities' privatization and (having these) is the remaining hurdle before we could privatize," the official said.

Perez explained that the value of a power plant could be enhanced if it had a TSC, especially in Luzon where there is currently an excess generating capacity.

# Zambales mango to conquer int'l market

IBA, Zambales—Don't get surprised if mangoes labeled with "Zambales Mango" soon invade local and international markets.

Officials of the provincial agriculture office here are pushing for the labeling of mangoes grown in the province to properly identify and promote the local fruit's distinct qualities.

Zambales gained a global reputation for being the producer of the sweetest mango in the world when it was featured in the 1995 Guinness Book of World Records, local officials said.

Juanito Posadas, provincial agriculturist, said the Zambales Mango Industry Development Council was finalizing the planned individual labeling of Zambales mangoes to separate them from mangoes grown and harvested from other provinces.

"Traders are usually bringing Zambales mangoes to Metro Manila and other provinces, especially during the peak season. This is the reason why we would like to have our mangoes labeled for proper identification," Posadas said.

He said individual labeling of fresh mangoes is not a common practice in the country, but putting this practice in place would prevent some traders from falsely claiming that they sell mangoes from Zambales.

Zambales mangoes are known for its sweetness, juiciness, absence of fiber in its flesh, and thickness of pulp.

Posadas said the ZMIDC is also planning to develop post-harvest facilities and a packaging house where sorting, grading and packaging of mangoes will be done to increase its market potentials.

The province's mango industry development plan identified Zambales as one of the leading producers of quality mangoes in the country and among the pioneers in domestic mango production.

Century-old bearing mango trees are found in the northern towns of the province. At least 6,059 people are engaged in mango growing in Zambales, most of them in the towns of Botolan and Iba.

Records from local agricultural office here also showed that more than 8,300 hectares in the province are devoted to mango growing. Three mango varieties—carabao, piko and Indian—are grown in at least 556,965 trees, mostly in backyards. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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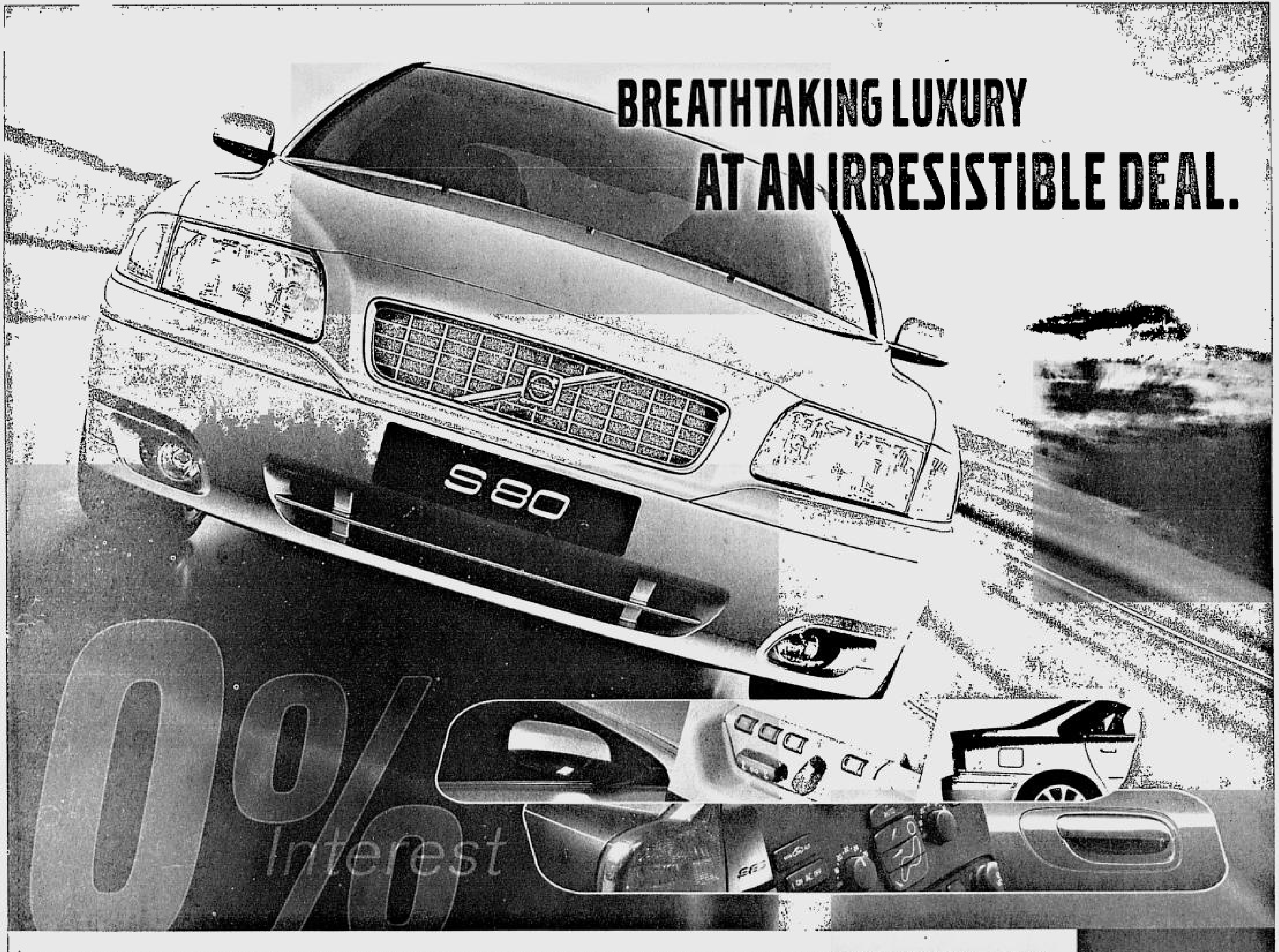

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

# Buhai project another Tagaytay Highlands

## *But critics warn it is an accident waiting to happen*

**By Jerry Esplanada**

*(First of three parts)*

SPECIAL REPORT

LESS than 100 of the planned 10,000 housing units have been built so far. They're sitting on loose soil. RANDY HORMILLOSA

"THE TIME has come" for Buhai, proclaimed the Bulacan provincial government and Alto Projekt Asia, a Pasig City-based real estate firm.

Buhai is the acronym for Bulacan Housing and Agro-Industrial Inc.

Perched on the slopes of a hill chain in the sleepy towns of Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad (DRT), the housing project has been touted by Gov. Josefina dela Cruz as "another Tagaytay Highlands" and an example of visionary thinking.

The 300-hectare Buhai, marketed as Buhai Garden Homes, is the planned relocation site for some 10,000 squatter families that will be displaced by the government's multibillion-peso railway project that will traverse parts of Bulacan.

According to Dela Cruz, Buhai is part of the capitol's total master plan. It will also showcase what the Central Luzon province considers a "total township development program."

She believes it would be a big boon to one of Bulacan's growth centers—the Norzagaray-San Jose del Monte area.

The two-term governor said she wanted Buhai to be a "legacy of my administration."

Dela Cruz's critics, including some local officials affiliated with the administration Lakas-CMD to which the governor belongs, however, do not share her optimism.

### Warning

The Buhai project is an accident waiting to happen, warned Norzagaray Mayor Feliciano Legaspi.

*"Umulan lang pwedeng mahulog 'yung mga bahay,"* Legaspi said as he also pointed out the site was not only landslide-prone but also geologically hazardous.

Buhai is sitting on loose, watery grounds and could be a "potential Cherry Hills," cautioned the mayor.

The Aug. 3, 1999 housing estate disaster at the Cherry Hills subdivision in Antipolo City killed at least 59 people and destroyed 379 houses. Improper quarrying had reportedly led to the landslide tragedy.

"Putting up a housing estate on those slopes was wrong. That's one of the reasons we didn't give them a permit. Even portions of the (8.67-km) access road to the project site have either cracked or caved in," Legaspi told the INQUIRER.

A similar warning was made by Legaspi in November 2002, following the collapse of a portion of the housing project after a heavy downpour.

Like Legaspi, Bangkal barangay chair Marcelino Punzal scoffed at the capitol's bold plan. "That place, which sits on deposits of silica and diorite, is prone to landslides, especially during rainy season," Punzalan affirmed.

He described as "quite scary" the thought of moving to one of the 28-square-meter concrete "boxes" being built at Buhai. *"Baka matabunan kami ng lupa pag doon kami tumira,"* Punzal said matter-of-factly.

His woman aide quoted one of the Buhai engineers as saying the place was "not ideal for building concrete homes because the soil there is loose."

In native Bulacan-speak, Bangkal folk described the site's soil condition as *buhaghag* and *kalang-kalang*, both meaning loose.

Every time it rains, the tendency of soil particles there is *humuho* or slide, said a 67-year-old resident.

In the neighboring town of DRT, engineer Susana de Guzman admitted she was not familiar with the site's soil composition. "I understand the hill's soil cover had been stripped. The plan is to put up houses on the slopes, like the ones you see in Baguio," said De Guzman, DRT's planning and development head.

Asked if her family would consider moving to Buhai, she joked "only if it's our last option."

It is "common knowledge" that loose soil is not an ideal basement for house construction, Punzalan said.

Silicon dioxide is one of the most common compounds in the earth's crust, according to its website.

In general, sandy particles are loose materials "with high silicon oxide (quartz) content," said Dr. Purisima Pajaro of the Bureau of Soils. "Loam to clay-loam is a good, if not, the better combination. But even clay, when it absorbs too much water, the tendency of its surface is to erode," said the soil scientist.

Project contractor Dominador Tupaz Jr. dismissed the apprehensions of Norzagaray folk as mere *haka-haka* (hearsay). He doubted "if something (like the Cherry Hills disaster) will happen there."

For her part, Dela Cruz told this reporter: "Do you think I will allow myself to be attached to something that (is not safe). I was very careful about that… *Baka tapos na akong mag-*governor *'di pa ako tapos sa pagsagot sa issue na 'yan.* I don't need that kind of burden to my conscience."

To back up her claim, Dela Cruz furnished the INQUIRER a copy of Buhai's "geotechnical investigation report" on the "soil strength parameters of the underlying soil and slope stability of the unrestrained slopes upon which the proposed relocation site is to be founded."

The four-page report, prepared by BIPGMTE, a Buhai consultant firm, neither said the site was safe nor unsafe for the construction of a housing project.

### Recommendations

Instead, it made the following recommendations:

- On the soil's bearing capacity, "the top soil that were not used as basis for the interpretation of the soil-bearing pressure should not (be) used as foundation material."
- On the stability of the critical unrestrained slopes, "the slip circle with the minimum factor of safety (should) be intercepted by a cantilever retaining structure. An alternative method is to increase the factor of safety against sliding for slopes with factor of safety less than the acceptable value of 1.50 is to decrease the overburden(ed) soil pressure."
- On foundation support, it was "highly recommended that foundations of the proposed structures should not be less than the minimum width used in the interpretation of the soil bearing pressures."

### Nothing wrong

"Standard split spoon and shelby tubes" were used during the soil sampling. "Twenty bore holes were sunk at the proposed site using the standard penetration test… The test holes had a minimum depth of 50 feet and a maximum depth of 65 feet," said the report.

Tupaz asserted there was nothing wrong with building homes on mountain slopes, saying "it's okay" in many countries.

At the same time, he pointed out in the country "there's no (proper) land use. The proper use should be not using flat land for housing. It's such a waste of space. In the future you'll end up with no land. That's the idea why (Buhai was put up) there."

Dela Cruz said it was not surprising some people had misgivings about the project.

"Normally, when we talk of low-cost housing you always talk of level land. This one has a mountainous topography like the Tagaytay Highlands (in Cavite). (When the project is completed) Bulacan squatters will be (feeling) like Tagaytay Highlands residents," she said.

> The site was not only landslide prone but also geologically hazardous

### Model community

Actually, Buhai is a joint venture of the North Luzon Railways Development Corp. (under the supervision of the Bases Conversion Development Authority) and the Bulacan provincial government "with the assistance of Alto Projekt Asia (Tupaz's firm)," said a 70-page report on the realty project.

The report described Buhai as a "model sustainable community conceived to jumpstart the development of the eastern part of Bulacan."

Dela Cruz believes Buhai is several notches above the national government's program for squatters.

In the past, she recalled, the government simply "transferred the (squatter) problem" by concentrating only on housing.

"(But) they're not solving the problem," said the governor, citing Sapang Palay in San Jose del Monte and the "(Fidel V. Ramos squatter) relocation" site in Norzagaray.

During ordinary days, "many homes remain padlocked because the people are still in Manila where they live as squatters. They also work there."

Dela Cruz said they "hope to solve the problem by providing not only housing, but providing (squatters with) livelihood opportunities. That is important."

---

# Exclusive preview set for Fifth Avenue Place

ROBINSONS Land Corp. will be hosting a series of intimate cocktails for friends and business associates to witness an exclusive preview of the Fifth Avenue Place, RLC's newest high-rise residential project. This major event is set at 6 p.m. on Feb. 17, 18 and 19 at the Cameron Forbes Room of the Manila Polo Club.

During this event, guests and prospective buyers will become acquainted with the unique lifestyle and amenities that Fifth Avenue Place can offer.

Fifth Avenue Place is a stone's throw away from international schools, retail and entertainment centers and other lifestyle establishments in the master-planned Global City. It is an ideal residential address that is just minutes away from the Makati and Ortigas business districts. It is also near Edsa, the South Luzon Expressway and C-5.

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This 38-story residential structure's unit mix consists primarily of one-bedroom units which may be combined into larger two- to three-bedroom units. The unit's efficient layout provides the bedroom, living, dining areas with window spaces that look out unto the metro's skyline, Laguna lakeshore and the posh villages of Dasmariñas and Forbes.

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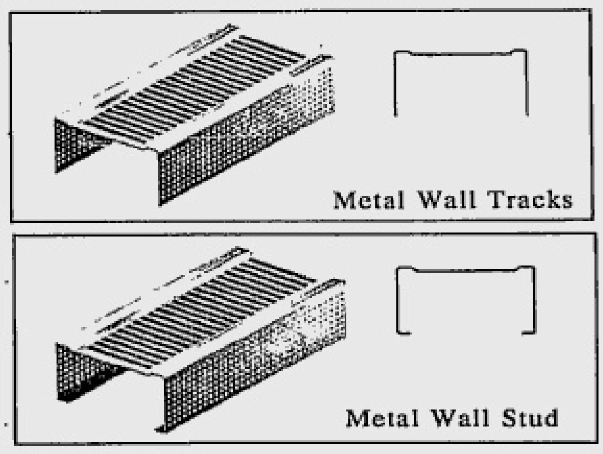

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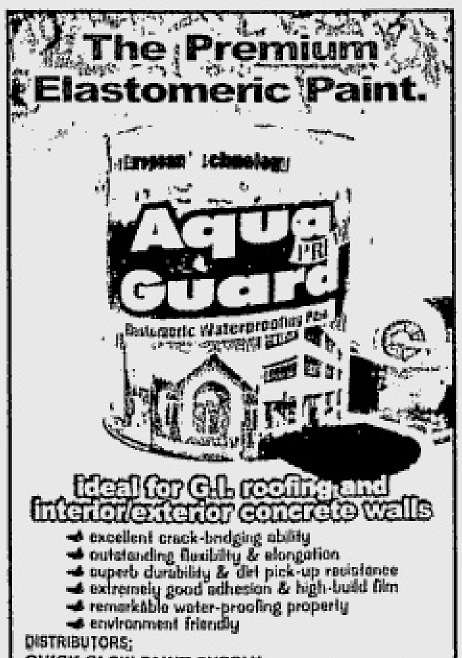

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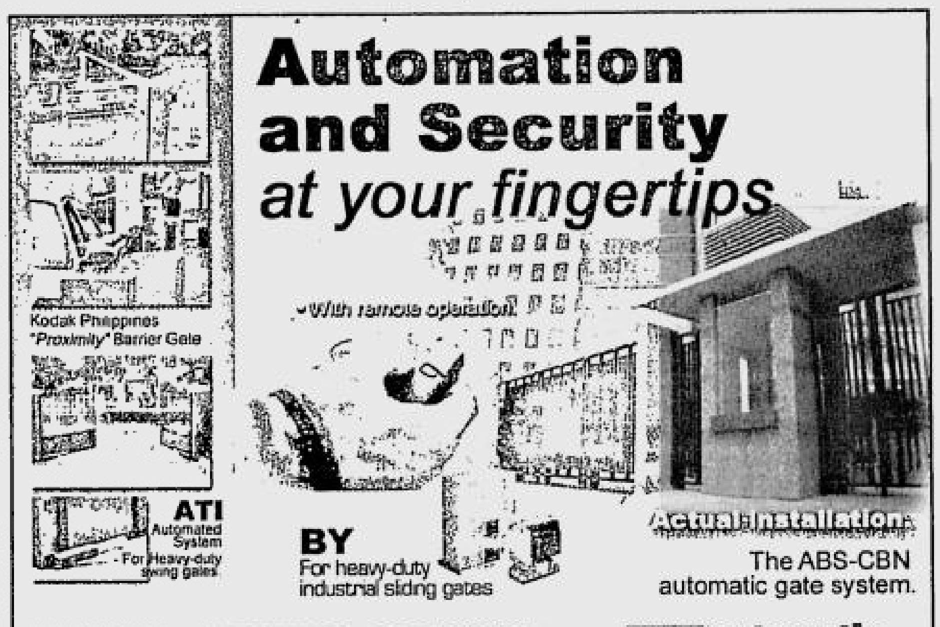
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# Developers worry about cement price hike

By Charles E. Buban

THE GOVERNMENT should do something to check the spiraling cost of cement.

A GROUP representing the country's real estate developers is appealing to President Macapagal-Arroyo to resolve the spiraling cost of cement that has already affected not just the housing industry but also other sectors attached to it.

The Subdivision and Housing Developers Association Inc. has earlier asked the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and the Department of Trade and Industry to address the concern and immediately explore innovative schemes to assure constant price and supply of cement so as not to jeopardize the housing industry.

"How can the country's home builders continue to put up more houses when cement, a primary building material, is getting more and more expensive?" asked SHDA national president Marilu Alferez, who is also senior vice president and general manager of Robinsons Homes Inc.

She feared that if Malacañang would not act in time, the housing industry could be put in a situation where it will cease to be a major pump-primer of the economy due to an immense decrease in construction activities.

## From P110 to P120

According to the recent price monitoring report of the DTI, local Portland cement sold in the National Capital Region now costs P125, or P5 higher than the P120 recorded in December.

Local cement firms earlier said the increase in the price of cement was due to the increase in the costs of power, raw materials and other factors affecting business, and the peso depreciation.

If the price gets any higher, it will already break last month's reassurance from the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines that any new price of cement will not exceed P125 per bag to end users in the National Capital Region, up to the end of June.

## Much higher

Outside the NCR, the price of cement is much higher. The prevailing price of cement in Cebu (as of January) is P134, up P7 from last December's P127.

The prevailing price in Cagayan de Oro is P135 compared with the P127 in December. In certain areas in the Visayas and Mindanao, average cement prices can even reach as high as P150.

"Sixteen months ago, prices were as low as P75 per bag," noted Alferez.

The situation is very alarming according to SHDA chair Jesus Atencio, who is president of Firm Builders Realty and Development Corp. He noted that the price increase has already hampered the production goals of developers and the group's ability to deliver its commitment to produce 200,000 housing units by this year.

## No justifiable reason

Alferez explained that the SHDA sees no justifiable reason for the increase in the price of cement when inflation levels have remained stable throughout the year and the cement industry's production capacities are still under 50 percent.

"The situation if not immediately resolved will be detrimental to President Arroyo's flagship program on low-cost housing and has a direct bearing on the effective and efficient participation of the private sector, in particular the developers to the overall National Shelter Program," she explained.

## Difficult to maintain

"It would be difficult to maintain affordable levels of house and lot packages," said SHDA second vice president Manuel Colayco.

He added that the government should help let the SHDA break the bias of cement manufacturers toward the cartel of cement supply with the end in view of controlling prices.

Alferez believes that inasmuch as the SHDA supports the government's call to address the country's housing need, the government should also protect the endeavors of private sector developers by ensuring stable prices of all construction materials.

## Direct importation

In this regard, SHDA members are planning to import cement directly and has requested President Macapagal to impose a zero tariff rate for direct importation by industry organizations (such as the SHDA) to facilitate the competitive entry of cement in the country.

SHDA developer-members—composed of about 250 small, medium, large and publicly listed real estate companies—are looking at the possibility of pooling their requirements to be able to directly import cement products.

An initial estimate by the SHDA shows a remarkable decrease in landed price of imported cement.

"Should the government grant the request for a lowering of the tariff rate, developers will find it more advantageous to continue importation," Atencio said.

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# Danger signs of an inefficient builder

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

**BUILDING DREAMS**

BEING in the construction business is difficult. More so these days in which consumer spending on construction projects is slow and builders compete fiercely for clients. Contractors should also do everything that they can to reduce costs and increase profits. For some organizations, simply surviving and staying in business is their only goal for the year.

We have seen many contractors that suddenly close shop. Many have lost money and have been deserted by their clients. If you are a contractor and are struggling to make it out in the difficult and risky world of contracting, recognizing the danger signs early can greatly improve your company's performance and hence enhance your profitability.

## Danger signs

The danger signs of an inefficient builder include:

- **Too Many Repeat Work**—A customer will always reject sloppy work and this is a sign in which quality can be the biggest issue. Review your procedures and see if you have any problems with the processes in which you do things.
- **Too Many Problems at the Site**—As a manager, you are supposed to steer the direction of your company and not solve the day-to-day problems. Delegate as much as you can to your subordinates. But make sure that you periodically monitor their performance.
- **Too Much Overtime Work**—If you find yourself working till midnight and even on Sundays, then it may be time that you review your staffing procedures. You might be in need of additional help in the technical and operational details of the job.
- **Late Collection**—You might have a lot of jobs but you are always delayed in collecting payment. Find out the reasons for your delayed collection. It can be that you are sending out your billing too late. The details of your billing might also be inadequate and therefore your client cannot pay them properly.
- **Delayed Work**—If a lot of your projects are delayed, then you might be compressing your schedules too much by being too optimistic on your capabilities. There may be inefficiencies when it comes to managing materials, staff, equipment and other resources. Have a detailed schedule on the work that has to be done at the site.
- **Always Lose on Bids**—Big construction projects are commonly bid out to contractors and most of the time, it is based on costs. The lowest bidder gets the opportunity to do the job. If you continuously lose out in a bid due to a very high price quote, then you may have to review your estimates. If other builders can do it at such a low cost, then why can't you?
- **Unhappy Subcontractors and Suppliers**—Subcontractors usually work with low margins since they cannot get the job directly from the owner. The moment you do not pay them on time, then they would have tremendous difficulty in making ends meet. It is always best that you treat your suppliers well so that the next time you need them, they will be there.

In dealing with subcontractors and suppliers, the Golden Rule is: "Never Do Unto Your Suppliers What You Do Not Want Your Customers To Do Unto You"

- **Your Staff Keeps Leaving You**—A high turnover rate can be a sign that your employees are no longer contented with the job. This occurrence also affects the morale of the remaining employees. Perhaps they are working too much and would want to take a break.

**Final Note.** You do not want to get caught with a problem before it is too late and becomes unmanageable. Before problems get out of hand, there are usually many warning signs that sometimes are not obvious. It is the job of the manager or the leader to detect these.

Recognizing the warning signs early can make your company improve immediately. Look at the processes and check the ways on how you can improve efficiencies. There are many items you can consider for improvement. This includes materials, machines, manpower, methods and the money you are investing.

Even the large and successful construction businesses of today experience these problems. The reason they still exist today is that they were able to recognize the warning signs and acted swiftly to prevent further damage. You too can do it!

*E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.*

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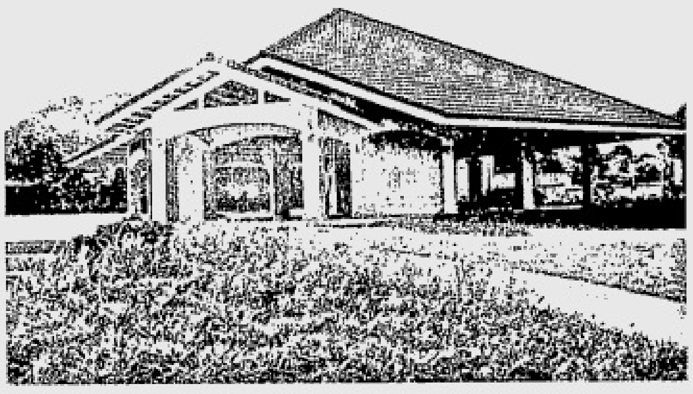
THE NEWLY opened multipurpose hall of Ferndale Homes

# Ferndale Homes opens new multipurpose hall

TO PROVIDE residents a venue to boost closer family ties and neighborhood camaraderie, Ferndale Homes recently opened its multipurpose hall at its newly developed Phase 4.

A welcome addition to Ferndale's growing valued amenities, the 2,066-square-meter activity center comprises an elevated, well-lit main hall, surrounded by manicured lawns especially designed to accommodate various community events, exclusive gatherings and even Masses.

The opening of the multipurpose hall further enhances the already vibrant community of Ferndale as it creates an opportunity for neighbors and their families to enjoy fun-filled recreational activities together.

Ferndale Homes is a premier residential community situated right at the heart of Quezon City. The first cluster homes concept in the country, it offers a Mediterranean experience for modern Filipino families while providing a master-planned community of three-bedroom houses that promotes close neighborhood ties with its nonexistent fences, excellent facilities and village management. Ferndale Homes also has ready access to schools, hospitals and churches within the area.

A residential development project of Ayala Land Inc., Ferndale Homes is deemed a perfect setting to nurture families while being afforded modern conveniences for a quality way of life.

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# An alternative makeover of unsightly steel windows

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE WINDOW of the human soul is the eye, while the face of the home is its window. Looking at the regular steel casement windows of many Filipino houses—with their unsightly clay putties cracking and dropping all around the glass—is like looking at a person who just woke up, the "morning glories" still stuck at the corners of their eyes.

Conventional steel casement windows use grilles with the "I", "T" or "Z" bar, and the glass plates are applied with putty—a clay-like material that cracks and peels off after a few months. Though the materials and the process are cheap, at P150 per square foot, the overall look is not unlike that of your regular municipal prison cells.

But it is, so far, the best that mass housing developers could think of given the available materials and technologies. High-end aluminum windows go for at least P400 per square foot, and the more expensive PVCs cost P1,000 and more. Reconciling pleasing esthetics with affordability has become almost an impossible task.

That was, until housing and building steel components maker Rapid Forming Corp decided to invest in research and development of new windows inspired by what company executives discovered in an exhibit in China. Ironically, it was there that they chanced upon Italian-inspired coated steel windows that cost between the price of steel casements and those of high-end aluminum and PVCs.

## Pretty sight

When the company unveiled its own coated steel window creation in ceremonies in Makati last week, it was a pretty sight. The window—with tea brown or ivory white color—was putty free, with rubber-sealed ¼ inch (6 mm) thick glass (usual window glass thickness is 1/8 inch or 3 mm) and dimensionally accurate measurements.

Developers were surprised to find out that it only costs P250 per square foot to produce.

Air- and water-tight, the coated steel window boasts full-view opening and flexible ventilation. It has a transom (skylight) and the manufacturer designed ready-made components and pivot-type hinges to make installations easy.

## Elegant windows

Organization of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines chair Giovanni Olivares, whose Mahogany Villas in Calamba cost P400,000 per unit, wanted appealing windows to add spunk to his 24-sq m (floor area) bungalows, and bumped into the coated steel windows. He chose these windows for his houses.

Said Olivares, who's president of Malate Construction and Development Corp.: "We were attracted to its elegant appeal. And it is very durable and airtight, guaranteeing that the rain won't seep in. And it's almost sound-proof, which is ideal if you use air conditioning."

Rodolfo Cenina, engineering head of Rapid Forming, said prepainted and galvanized coated steel windows are manufactured in the country using special machines. Only the frames were imported, but raw materials were used. "The system is imported but the manufacturing is local."

He suggested, however, that for protection against intruders, coated steel windows would still need to have security grilles. Grilles inside glass, however, would be more esthetically pleasing. Rapid Forming—housed at Vazquez Madrigal Plaza in Annapolis Greenhills—can make more than 40 pieces of "4 by 4" windows (1.2 meters x 1.2 meters) a day.

Cenina said it would be more advantageous if windows were mass-produced. For now, individual homeowners are welcome to know more about the new windows. "We already had three clients during the pre-launch—an architect, a developer and a lawyer."

---

# *Developer offers Valentine treats*

IT'S about giving more than love on Valentine's Day.

Noted real estate developer Laguna Properties Holdings, Inc. celebrates the month of hearts for its buyers by offering prestigious Cartier ladies watches and golf club memberships in a month-long Valentine's Day offering from Feb. 8 to March 8.

A total of 30 qualified buyers—15 each from St. Alexandra Estates and Sta. Rosa Estates I and II—can choose from a stainless steel quartz Tank Francaise or Santos de Cartier automatic, valued at around P170,000, or a golf club membership at Capitol Hills worth P180,000.

Meanwhile, 10 memberships to the prestigious Eagle Ridge Golf Club, each worth P450,000 will go to the first 10 qualified buyers of Hacienda Sta. Monica in Lipa City.

These valuable prizes reflect the character and locations of the LPHI developments: St. Alexandra Estates in Antipolo; Hacienda Sta. Monica in Lipa City, Batangas; and Sta. Rosa Estates I and II in Laguna.

Set in scenic and cool Antipolo, St. Alexandra Estates is far enough to get away from the city's frenetic pace yet still conveniently near vital destinations of work, shopping, and leisure.

Sta. Rosa Estates I and II are thriving, master-planned communities that are vital cogs in the grand vision of an Ayala South.

Homes in St. Alexandra Estates and Sta. Rosa Estates I and II are built using the Phenix Building System—an international, environment-friendly building technique that promises both durability and flexibility.

Meanwhile, the genteel appeal of farming has never been more accessible and worry-free with LPHI's establishment of Hacienda Sta. Monica in the pristine clime of Lipa City.

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# Auspicious living at Montgomery Place

MONTGOMERY Place, the flagship townhouse project of Ayala Land Inc. on E. Rodriguez Avenue in Quezon City, celebrated the Chinese New Year by gathering guests and existing residents in the Townhall, the centerpiece clubhouse of the community.

The celebration started with the Eucharistic Mass that was officiated by Fr. Eli Mata of Christ the King Parish. Event host and famous astrologer Henry Palacios shared with the visitors a background story of the area. He said Montgomery Place is auspicious since "the entrance is situated on the eastern side, which symbolizes the rising of the sun. And behind it, you have the San Juan River, a nurturing element, which serves as the area's border."

TOWNHALL is the centerpiece clubhouse of Montgomery Place.

Guests were then led to the driveway where a traditional lion dance was performed. The ritual is believed to bring good luck as the loud beating of gongs, cymbals and drums are said to drive away evil spirits. Lunch was served afterward.

In the afternoon, visitors lined up at the calligraphy station to have their names and the names of their family and friends done in delicate Chinese script by artist Susan Ching. At the social hall, where the Chan Lim paintings of beautiful plum blossoms and various other subjects were exhibited, a Chinese painting session was conducted and led by Alex for kids and adults.

Montgomery Place is a charming neighborhood with all the advantages of big city living. Forty-five families are now living there and when another 90 units are turned over to buyers this year, the community will come to life even more.

# The Central Bank strikes back

## MR. BEARBULL

*Ron Nathan*

I HAVE just returned from Athens where the Olympics will be held in a few months. There is no age limit, but the officials refused to let me enter for the Decathlon, which consists of 10 grueling events. They said I could not throw the hammer because I was an 'ammerteur. As for throwing the discus, they refused to discus(s) it. I did not fancy competing against 14-year olds on the parallel bars and the marathon is too long.

So I entered the 200-meter hurdles, but unfortunately, I tripped over the first one and finished 20 minutes behind. The rest of the team asked, "Where has that old runner bean?" Still, I consoled myself with the saying that nice guys finish last. On the way home, I had a mishap. She was very accommodating and used to work for Northwest Airlines whose motto is "Fly the friendly thighs."

I am very worried about what my family should eat. Obviously, chicken is out as 18 people have died of bird flu. During a 9-ball match between Efren Reyes and Earl Strickland, the referee called "Foul" and all the spectators ran for their lives. Beef is out because of mad cow disease. They even have a mad cow on the triangular portions of wrapped cheese.

We can't eat pork because a virologist (someone who takes Viagra), found traces of bird flu in the nasal passages of pigs, and he nose best. It sounds oinkredible but pigs are 99-percent identical with humans genetically. They even have piggy banks.

So the safest food to eat are fish and vegetables, but there is still a problem. Fish, especially at red tide, contains mercury, which in sufficient quantity is very poisonous. So you must either take the fish into a woodwork shop and put it into a vice, or go to a garage and use the hydraulic press. I don't have this problem. My wife sits on it.

As for the vegetables, the farmers spray them with pesticides, so I take them with me every night into my bathtub, together with my rubber duck. I play with them for an hour, then put them in the washing machine to be spin-dried 3 times. They emerge as pure as organically grown vegetables but the lettuce usually gets shredded and ends up as watercress. One day, I forgot to remove my rubber duck and everything got fowled up.

My friend bought a CD of the Lion King in Quiapo for P30. On the front, it shows Simba but at the back it reads "Da lyin' king." He does not know whether it is a pirated copy or political propaganda.

* * *

LAST week, I wrote that there would be a rally within a week. I knew this to be a certainty because the degree of risk had fallen from 100, at the peak of the market, to only 4, and it had remained at that level for 3 days. For those chartists that follow candlesticks, there was a spinning top so fine as to be almost a doji. Either way, it indicated indecision on the part of investors as to what the market was going to do next, and as it occurred after a steep correction, it indicated that the trend might be about to turn.

The next day, the Phisix was up slightly, confirming the turnaround, and the momentum had risen to 10. I sent out a BUY signal on Tuesday of TEL, then P825. Its degree of risk was only 2 so it could hardly go any lower. On Wednesday, the price has not moved significantly, but momentum had risen to 10, a clear signal that it was about to recover. On Wednesday night, the Research Department, which is totally separate from me, sent out a BUY signal to all our clients. This made me even more confident because when technical and fundamental analysts concur, using different methods, it is almost always right.

On Thursday, I sent out a third BUY signal as momentum had risen to 15, and on Friday, it took off, rising to P910, up P60 on the day. Momentum on Friday was still only 23 so I expected it to rise further and on Monday, it jumped another P30 to P940, up P125 on my original recommendation.

It was also announced that there would be an analysts' briefing on Feb. 19 instead of Feb. 26. Usually, when results are brought forward, it indicates good news. The meeting is being held at the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel. If the results were bad, they would hold it on top of a mountain in ROMBLON. I marble at some of my puns.

On Thursday, the peso had sunk to an all time low of 56.22 and the central bank was forced to intervene. This can be seen from the very high volume traded—$202 million. Deputy Governor Tetangco warned that currency traders would be carefully monitored and that action would be taken against them. In the afternoon, he raised the reserve requirement of the banks from 17 percent to 19 percent. This immediately took P30 billion in liquidity out of the system. On this announcement, the peso rallied back to just below 56 and the stock market reacted positively on Friday, rising 30 points. This is the second time he has reacted vigorously to a peso crisis. One reason that TEL and GLOBE rose on Friday was that they have large dollar exposure, so anything that will stabilize or strengthen the peso must be good for them.

The other news was that inflation had been revised upwards to 4.1 percent. For years, inflation has been calculated on the basis that the majority of Filipinos only consume steamed rice and water, walk to work and survive without electricity. I am exaggerating, of course, but the model was unrealistic. Now it takes into account price increases in gasoline, electricity and water rates. During the year, it could rise to 5 percent. One thing is certain. Interest rates are going to rise and this will be bad for property companies, people with mortgages and companies with large peso debt.

The downgrade by Moody's last week will make it more expensive to borrow abroad so companies with large dollar exposure will also be adversely affected. If the government is determined to press ahead with the sale of $500 million to $750 million in bonds by the end of next month, they will have to pay a higher rate of interest. It goes without saying that the government will have to pay more on its total dollar and peso debt amounting to P5.3 trillion. And for 2004, the deficit will increase by P198 billion, probably more because of pre-election spending.

The United States announced that the unemployment rate had fallen from 5.7 percent to 5.6 percent and that 112,000 jobs had been created in January. This is less than the 140,000 that the economists were hoping for but better than the 1,000 created in December. Alan Greenspan predicted that jobs would be created as the economy picked up and it looks as if he will be correct. Wall Street responded positively to the news. Over the past year, the dollar has fallen 17 percent against the euro but the G7 meeting asked other countries to keep their exchange rates flexible. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 9, 2004)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES** | | | | | |
| **BANKS** | | | | | |
| Banco de Oro Univ. Bank | 17 | 17.5 | 17 | 17.5 | 100,500 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 47 | 47 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 1,991,300 |
| China Banking Corp. | 670 | 670 | 670 | 670 | 310 |
| Citystate Savings Bank | 16.25 | 16.25 | 16.25 | 16.25 | 1,800 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 38.5 | 39 | 38.5 | 39 | 53,000 |
| Export and Ind. Bank Inc. | 0.5 | 0.52 | 0.5 | 0.51 | 640,000 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 26 | 27 | 26 | 26.5 | 250,500 |
| Philippine National Bank | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 6,000 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 17,000 |
| Rizal Comm. Banking Corp. | 12.75 | 12.75 | 12.75 | 12.75 | 1,600 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 200 |
| **FINANCIAL SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1995 | 2005 | 1995 | 2005 | 630 |
| Sun Life Financial Inc. | 1510 | 1510 | 1510 | 1510 | 2,060 |
| **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL** | | | | | |
| **COMMUNICATION** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 23 | 23.25 | 23 | 23 | 9,500 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 1,480,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 875 | 890 | 875 | 865 | 51,240 |
| Ipeople Inc. | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.16 | 1.18 | 47,000 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.045 | 0.045 | 0.045 | 0.045 | 900,000 |
| Pilipino Tel. Corp. | 1.24 | 1.3 | 1.24 | 1.28 | 23,412,000 |
| Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co. | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 100,000 |
| Transpacific Broadcast | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 5,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 925 | 950 | 925 | 940 | 193,920 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 10,000 |
| Philweb Corp. | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 1,000,000 |
| **POWER & ENERGY** | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 19 | 19.5 | 18.5 | 19.5 | 334,100 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 29.5 | 32 | 29.5 | 31.5 | 1,049,900 |
| Petron Corp. | 3 | 3.15 | 3 | 3.15 | 6,667,000 |
| Salcon Power Corp. | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 1,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 1.28 | 1.28 | 1.28 | 1.28 | 150,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 83,000 |
| **CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS** | | | | | |
| Union Cement Corp. | 1.06 | 1.08 | 1.06 | 1.08 | 248,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Alaska Milk Corp. | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.15 | 3.15 | 11,000 |
| Ginebra San Miguel Inc. | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 4,500 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 18.75 | 19 | 18.75 | 18.75 | 324,500 |
| Swift Food Inc. | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 50,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 55.5 | 55.5 | 55.5 | 55.5 | 28,400 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 69 | 69 | 69 | 69 | 156,900 |
| Vitarich Corp. | 0.26 | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.27 | 700,000 |
| **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| Ayala Corp. | 5.8 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 930,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 14,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | 1 | 1 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 63,000 |
| ATN Holdings Inc. | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 100,000 |
| Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 100,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 0.59 | 0.59 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 10,880,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.19 | 0.2 | 0.19 | 0.2 | 40,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 1 | 1.02 | 1 | 1.02 | 170,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 23 | 23.75 | 23 | 23.75 | 789,000 |
| Global Business Hldgs Inc. | 48 | 48 | 48 | 48 | 500 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.06 | 200,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 36,000 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 1.86 | 1.86 | 1.86 | 1.86 | 200,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.06 | 1.08 | 4,976,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.29 | 0.3 | 0.29 | 0.3 | 7,630,000 |
| Roxas Holdings Inc. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 13.75 | 13.75 | 13.75 | 13.75 | 37,700 |
| **MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING** | | | | | |
| Picop Resources Inc. | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 200,000 |
| **HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | 0.47 | 0.47 | 0.47 | 0.47 | 80,000 |
| Mondragon Intl Phils Inc. | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 50,000 |
| **BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) | 23 | 23.25 | 23 | 23.25 | 633,100 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series M | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 800 |
| PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 1,900 |
| PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 1,800 |
| PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 1,000 |
| **OTHERS** | | | | | |
| Centro Escolar University | 7.5 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 5,000 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 36,569,000 |
| Araneta Properties Inc. | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 200,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 260,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.21 | 0.22 | 0.21 | 0.22 | 4,890,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.06 | 1.1 | 1.06 | 1.1 | 3,253,000 |
| MRC Allied Ind. Inc. | 0.0975 | 0.0975 | 0.0975 | 0.0975 | 400,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 6.2 | 6.3 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 12,410,000 |
| Zipporah Rlty Hldgs Inc. | 0.225 | 0.225 | 0.225 | 0.225 | 10,000 |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A | 0.225 | 0.225 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 200,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. A | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 5,000,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. A | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 300,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. B | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.43 | 10,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 5,000,000 |

# SEC probes buyers of PSE shares

**By Michelle V. Remo**

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is set to look into the identities of the people who have bought shares of the Philippine Stock Exchange since these were first traded last Dec. 15.

According to SEC Chair Lilia Bautista, the move would determine whether brokers themselves bought the PSE shares. Brokers are banned from buying the shares because it would defeat the purpose of demutualization.

"We want to look into the identity of the buyers because there might be circumvention (of the demutualization rule)," Bautista said in a press briefing, adding that she had ordered the SEC's market regulation department to begin its investigation on the matter.

Last Dec. 15, the PSE began trading its own shares, which are owned by the exchange's 184 broker-members. The long-overdue listing of the PSE shares came after the SEC threatened to slap a P1-million fine on the exchange for refusing to go public as mandated by law.

The demutualization of the PSE is intended to extend the ownership of the bourse to foreign and local investors aside from the brokers.

Under the rules on demutualization, member-brokers are now limited to owning a maximum of 20 percent of the exchange. Also, an individual is limited to own a maximum 5-percent share, while any industry or business group should not own more than 20 percent of the exchange.

Aside from trading the 9.2 million common shares of the PSE, the exchange is also planning to sell some of its shares through private placement. The plan to sell through a private placement was proposed after the PSE shares were traded very thinly since their listing.

According to a recent report from the SEC, only 68,960 shares of the PSE had been traded from Dec. 15 to Jan. 15.

The PSE board has tapped the services of ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc. to sell the PSE shares through private placement. Selling through private placement is intended to help dilute the PSE shares.

Earlier, the PSE board mandated the member-brokers to sell the exchange's shares at P119.50 each. The selling of the shares is expected to generate P733 million for the PSE.

# PLDT taps growing on-line gaming sector

**By Abigail L. Ho**

INDUSTRY leader Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. has forged a partnership with local online game publisher Level Up! to take advantage of the popularity of online gaming in the country today.

Under the tie-up, PLDT will provide a dedicated server farm composed of more than 200 processors to handle Level Up!'s localized version of the popular online game, Ragnarok.

A server farm is a collection of servers that act as central workhorses in a large network of computers.

Worldwide, Ragnarok has already attracted around three million subscribers, some 80,000 of whom are based in the Philippines.

Revenues for the local online gaming market now fall within a range of P100 million to P200 million, and is seen to grow even more, in proportion to its increasing popularity in the country.

"Online games are definitely creating a big wave here in the Philippines. This partnership is doubly significant because it contributes to the development of the local gaming industry and allows PLDT to develop solutions and products that would cater to the content needs of a growing business segment," PLDT senior vice president and business development head Ariel Roda said in a statement yesterday.

The partnership also included co-location of Level Up!'s server farm for Ragnarok and another online game, Oz World. This would be housed at a PLDT Telehousing facility, said PLDT senior vice president and corporate business group head Ernesto Alberto.

The Level Up! server farm allows more than 40,000 online gamers to log on simultaneously.

On a typical Saturday, Level Up! general manager Ben Colayco said the number of Ragnarok log ons could peak to as high as 34,000 players simultaneously.

Days other than Saturday, on the other hand, usually had 20,000 to 25,000 players simultaneously logged on to Ragnarok. Having the content hosted locally would allow Level Up! to make access to the same even easier and more affordable, he added.

Ragnarok is a massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) that takes place in a fantasy world called Midgard. In this world, humans, demons, magic spells and gods rule.

Because of its massively multiplayer nature, it can accommodate thousands of players online all at the same time.

While making access easier and more affordable for gamers, Roda said this new partnership could become a new revenue stream for PLDT.

## CURRENCIES

| February 9, 2004<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.786844 | 1.000000 | 55.9130 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.007451 | 0.009469 | 0.5294 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.454009 | 1.847900 | 103.3216 |
| Hongkong | Dollar | 0.101233 | 0.128657 | 7.1936 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.637999 | 0.810833 | 45.3361 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.593800 | 0.754660 | 42.1953 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.467192 | 0.593754 | 33.1986 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.603593 | 0.767106 | 42.8912 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 2.087230 | 2.652661 | 148.3182 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.209820 | 0.266660 | 14.9098 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.465808 | 0.591996 | 33.1003 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000093 | 0.000118 | 0.0066 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.020160 | 0.025621 | 1.4325 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.214229 | 0.272264 | 15.2231 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.270900 | 71.0598 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.266275 | 0.338409 | 18.9125 |
| Brazil | Real | 0.267998 | 0.340599 | 19.0439 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134240 | 0.170605 | 9.5390 |
| India | Rupee | 0.017404 | 0.022119 | 1.2367 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.207086 | 0.263186 | 14.7155 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.070792 | 0.089969 | 5.0304 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.542913 | 0.689988 | 38.5793 |
| Norway | Kroner | 0.114276 | 0.145233 | 8.1204 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 0.013780 | 0.017513 | 0.9792 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.113215 | 0.143885 | 8.0450 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000674 | 0.000856 | 0.0479 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.109642 | 0.139344 | 7.7911 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.015278 | 0.019417 | 1.08757 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.023693 | 0.030111 | 1.6836 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 0.000493 | 0.000627 | 0.0351 |

## DISCLOSURES

**SEMIRARA Mining Corp.** will hold a special stockholders' meeting on March 17, 10 a.m. at the 3/F of Dacon Building, Makati City to ratify the proposed capital restructuring of the company to eliminate its deficit retained earnings as well as support its capital expenditures and operating expenses.

* * *

**METRO Alliance Holdings and Equities Corp.** invested $30 million in Polymax Worldwide Ltd., giving it a controlling interest.

* * *

**A.SORIANO Corp.**'s 3.68 million shares were bought by its wholly owned subsidiary, Anscor Consolidated Corp.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Philippine Tobacco Flue-Curing and Redrying Corp.** were Alonzo Ancheta, Cesar Battung, Carlos Dominguez, Conrado Gozun, Emmeline Huang, Jose Leviste Jr., Patricio Lim, Bienvenido Tan Jr. and Bienvenido Tan III. Also, the company declared a cash dividend of P0.50 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of March 8 and will be payable not later than April 15.

* * *

**JOLLIBEE Foods Corp.** disclosed that its wholly owned subsidiary, Jollibee International Ltd. entered into an agreement for the purchase of 85-percent of Belmont Enterprises Ventures Ltd. which is the holding company of Shanghai-based Yonghe Group of Companies. The purchase will enable Jollibee to own and operate 77 stores of Yonghe King in China.

***Compiled by Maricar D.Tolosa, PDI Research***

# BSP fines 3 banks . . .

From page B1

P930,000 for 31 transactions entered into by iCurrencies that violated a BSP circular-letter issued in 1997. The circular prohibited the sale of foreign exchange to financial institutions other than the Authorized Agent Banks of the BSP and bank-affiliated foreign exchange corporations.

Central bank examiners found out that iCurrencies sold to iEB Currencies Inc. and Beneficial-PNB Life.

IBank, in its letter to the BSP, noted that its money-changing business was in transition from iEB to iCurrencies, which only secured an approval to operate on May 2000. The local bank ceased operating a forex corporation when the higher capital requirement took effect in 2001.

In the past, the Monetary Board had approved to reduce the penalties imposed on JP Morgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, and HSBC for violations of Sec.2 of Circular 102, according to an official document.

Penalties in some cases were reduced to P5,000 per violation from the maximum penalty of P30,000 for every irregular transaction.

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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### NOTICE OF LOSS

Meralco Stock Cert. 285600A under the name Gregorio C. Aruelo Jr.
(PDI-Jan. 27 & Feb. 3 &10, 2004)

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### ANNOUNCEMENT

**NOTICE OF LOSS**

Notice is hereby given that BOI Certificate of Registration No. VII EP 94-035 issued on 31 December 1994 as New Producer of Ceramic Souvenirs and Gift Items under the name of CERAMICHE MICHELOTTI, INC was lost.

(PDI – February 10, 2004)

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**SYSTEM SUPPORT**

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- Willing to assist client and work on extended hours / weekends and Holidays as needed.
- Dedicated and TEAM player & can handle pressure

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- Either Computer Science or related discipline
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- TEAM player & can handle pressure

Interested qualified applicants may send their resume with recent photo at the following address or via e-mail

**JIMAC, INCORPORATED**
**HR DEPARTMENT**
**Penthouse Flr. TC Plaza Building near cor. Cordillera St.**
**Quezon Ave., Quezon City**
**Tel. No. 742-6832 / 742-6840 / 742- 6289 / 742-6853**
**742-6859 and 742-6284 loc. 117**
**Fax No. 742-6634**
e-mail address: hrd@jimac-inc.com

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
**NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID**

The National Housing Authority invites contractors who have completed similar projects costing at least 5]% of the proposed contracts and accredited with PCAB to bid for the contracts listed below.

| Contract Package/ Location | Approved Budget | Funds Source | PCAB License | Work Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Catarman Resettlement Project, Brgy. Galutan, Catarman, Northern Samar | P5.48M | Local Housing Fund | Cat. B & MA for roads | Road works drainage, water system |

A. Eligibility forms may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00 at the NHA-BAC Secretariat Office, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon submission of a letter of intent not later than February 17, 2004 The BAC Secretariat may be contacted at Tel. Nos. 929-8016 and 928-4561/65 local 262

B. The schedules of the eligibility screening and bidding activities are as follows:

Issuance of Eligibility Forms - February 3-17, 2004
Deadline of submission of Eligibility Req'ts. - February 19, 2004/10:00 a.m. at the Office of the BAC Chairperson
Issuance of Bid Documents - February 20-27, 2004
Pre-Bid Conference - March 3, 2004 10:00 a.m.
Dropping of Bids/Opening of Bids - March 16, 2004 not later than 10:00 a.m

C. Bid documents shall be issued to eligible only upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,500.00

D. Bid security/deposits shall be in the form of cash, manager's or cashier's check only.

E. The provisions of the IRR of RA 9184 shall govern all particulars relative to registration, eligibility screening, bidding, evaluation of bids, post qualification and award of contract.

F. NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally any minor defect thereon and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government

(Sgd.) JOSEPH PETER S. SISON
*Assistant General Manager*
*Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee*

(PDI - Feb 3 & 10, 2004)

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Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Baguio City

**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION**

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that Rebekah May Mariquita B. Kiley has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from **REBECKAH MAY CHEESA** to **REBEKAH MAY MARIQUITA** in the birth certificate of **REBECKAH MAY CHEESA DE GUZMAN BAYANG** who was born on 07 May 1972 at Quezon City and whose parents are Romualdo E. Bayang and Belen G. de Guzman

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than February 17, 2004

(Sgd.) SYLVIA R. LAUDENCIA
City Civil Registrar

(PDI–Feb 3 & 10 2004)

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**24-HR**
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More Classified Ads on Page A10

**LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES**
*Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan*
1598 M. H. del Pilar St. cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-00-00; 526-01-00 connecting all departments

**INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID**

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietors; or (b) 60% Filipino-owned partnership/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

| ITB No. | Item/Description | Approved Budget | Source of Funds |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2003-020 | (one (1) year lease of 43 armored vehicles (4&6 wheelers) for various LBP branches | P 38,977,189.02 | LBP Funds |

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on March 10, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on February 24 2004 at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

ANTONIO T. HERNANDEZ
SVP, Corporate Services & Subsidiaries Sector
Chairman, Committee on Bids and Awards

(PDI – February 10 & 17, 2004)

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION**
Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
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☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
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# OBITUARIES

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## *Norma Barot Patacsil*

**August 26, 1940 – February 5, 2004**

She will be missed by her husband **Greg**; their children **Martin, Norge, Lia** and **Ferdie**, and **Miguel**; brothers and sisters, other relatives and friends.

Her body lies in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Broadway, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on February 11, 2004 at the Loyola Memorial Park at 1:00 p.m. after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at Mount Carmel.

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## DOMINADOR UY JUAN

*Died in the Grace of our Lord*
*on February 8, 2004 at the age of 56.*

His remains lie in state
at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels,
Sucat, Parañaque City.

The family requests
the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

---

## Clarita (Clara) Estrella Vda. De Santiago

Unit Manager – Manila Memorial Park, Inc.
Retired Senior Asst. VP – College Assurance Plan (Area X-SAM)
Retired Group Manager (Merry Mixers) – Pacific Plans, Inc.
Saladmaster Dealer
Dressmaker

*Peacefully joined our Creator*
*on February 8, 2004 at the age of 84.*

Her husband Paterno (†); children Rosalinda & Alberto Sandoval Jr. (†), Amada & Roland Paguia, Manolo & Virginia and Marica; grandchildren Benjie, Dennis, Mark, Chris, Angie, Jonathan, Roy, James & Carla; great grandchildren Miguel, Luis & Gabby; brothers & sister Abraham, Benjamin (†), Conrado, Bernardino Jr. and Carmen; in-laws request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Acacia Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 14, 2004 at the Manila Memorial Park-Sucat after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

---

We Remember Lovingly And Dearly

## ISIDRO "ROY" HOJAS ESCAÑO

of Cagayan de Oro City

on his 22nd Death Anniversary
on February 10, 2004

Masses will be offered today, Tuesday, February 10, 2004
at the following churches:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Greenhills Memorial Park**, Bulua | 4:00 p.m. |
| **San Vicente Ferrer**, Cugman | 6:00 a.m. |
| **San Isidro Labrador**, Gusa | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Jesus Nazareno Parish**, Recto Avenue | 5:30 p.m. |
| **Our Lady of Fatima**, Camaman-an | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel**, Carmen | 6:00 a.m. |
| **St. Augustine Cathedral** | 5:00 p.m. |
| **San Antonio de Padua**, Nazareth | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Santo Niño Parish**, Cogon | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Immaculate Conception**, Bulua | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Carmelite Monastery**, Camaman-an | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Carmelite Monastery**, Bukidnon | 6:30 a.m. |

We, his relatives, request the friends and pious reader to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

---

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• DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBITUARY •

**"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."**
John 3:16

# CLASSIFIEDS

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

AD NO. 2004-005

PD Ref No. PB040116-PP0012 / PR No.: GSD-04-006420

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARD COMMITTEE FOR CORPORATE TRANSCO**, invites local bidders / contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA)

   The abovementioned contractors should have the following valid License and Registration Particulars issued by PCAB.

   License : at least "Category D"
   Registration : at least "SMALL B"
2. Contract : **SUPPLY OF LABOR AND MATERIALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSCO PARKING AREAS AT BANTAYOG NG MGA BAYANI MINI-MUSEUM & PARK.**
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all labor, materials, supplies, tools, equipment and other incidentals necessary for the construction of TRANSCO PARKING AREAS AT BANTAYOG NG MGA BAYANI MINI-MUSEUM & PARK please refer to the attached General Technical Requirements.

   The budget for the Contract to be Bid is *P2,664,000.00* from the Internal Cash Generation of the National Transmission Corp. (TransCo).
4. Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance starting February 7, 2004 to February 20, 2004 at the BAC Secretariat, National Transmission Corp., MMD, G/F Bldg. 2, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon presentation of original PCAB License and a payment of non-refundable fee of **TWO HUNDRED Pesos (P 200.00)** per copy.
5. Deadline for submission of Letter of Intent, duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before *10:00 AM of February 23, 2004* and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted. Eligible bidders shall be notified on or before February 26, 2004.
6. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by eligible bidders from February 27, 2004 to March 12, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php300.00.
7. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on March 8, 2004, 10:00 AM at National Transmission Corp., MMD Conference Room, G/F Bldg. 2, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
8. Submission of Technical and Price Proposals of eligible bidders shall be at 10:00 AM on March 19, 2004 at National Transmission Corp., MMD Conference Room, G/F Bldg. 2, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. The technical proposal will be opened immediately in the presence of Bidder's representative who choose to attend.
9. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Act.
10. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) A.G. LABAYANI
*Chairman, Bids and Award Committee*

(PDI - Feb. 10 & 17, 2004)

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*PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION*
Building 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road,
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-6001 to 47 local 2101-2104
Direct Line: 840-2024 / Fax No.: (632) 840-1459

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites interested contractors to apply for pre-qualification and submit sealed bids for the project:

**SECURITY SERVICES FOR PNOC EC SAN ANTONIO GAS POWER PLANT SG03-614**

PNOC EC San Antonio Gas Power Plant is located at Echague, Isabela. The approved budget for the projects is PHP 1,833,578.64. The contract duration is for two (2) years.

Pre-Qualification and Bid Documents shall be available for issuance at the above address from the Contracts Assistant (c/o Mr. Carlos L. Mejias or Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting **February 2, 2004** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: One Thousand Two Hundred (Php 1,200.00).

For contractors who are not yet pre-qualified, the deadline for the submission of all pre-qualification requirements is on **February 27, 2004, 5:00 P.M.** Only contractors who can submit all the pre-qualification requirements before the set deadline shall be allowed to participate in the bidding.

The bidding shall utilize a two (2) sealed envelope system. The first envelope shall contain the Technical Bid and the second envelope shall contain the Financial Bid. The Technical and Financial Bids shall be submitted in two (2) sets each to the Contracts Assistant not later than **3:00 P.M.** of **March 16, 2004** at the PNOC EC Conference Room loated at the above address and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on **March 2, 2004, 1:00 P.M.** at PNOC EC San Antonio Gas Power Plant, Echague, Isabela.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

This publication is also posted in our website at www.pnoc-ec.com.ph and in the DBM website at www.procurementservice.net.

(Sgd.) **RICARDO S. BASALLO, JR.**
*Chairman*
*Contracts Award Committee*

(PDI - Feb. 10, 2004)

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

## Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

The Provincial Government of Cebu through its BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Buildings to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Propósed Expansion & Repair/Renovation of Barili District Hospital, Barili, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation CY 2001 for 20% Development Fund, Highways, Roads & Buildings, under PR # 04-35 dated 01-06-04 ALOBS # 100-04-01-386 dated 01-26-04 with an Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of P6,015,136.51.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

**Major Items of Work Involved**

Carpentry Works
Masonry Works
Carpentry Works

**Minimum Equipment Requirements:**

| Equipment Type | |
|---|---|
| Concrete Mixer, 1 bagger. | Owned |
| Welding Machine | Owned |
| Bar Cutter | Owned |
| Minor Tools | Owned |

**Schedule for the Procurement Activities:**

| | Dates | Time | Place |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms | Feb. 4-10, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents | Feb. 13, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Issuance of Notice to Eligible Bidders | Feb. 20, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Issuance of Plans and Bid documents | Feb. 23, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Pre-bidding Conference | Feb. 26, 2004 | 10:00 A.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Public Bidding | March 09, 2004 | 10:00 A.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |

Only Bids within the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Plans and Bid Documents can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P3,000.00

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids, post qualification and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614 / 253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. HABIN
Chairman

(PDI – February 4 & 10, 2004)

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Republic of the Philippines
**PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY**
Roxas Boulevard cor. San Luis St.
Pasay City, Philippines

## NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that BRIDGESTONE PRECISIONS MOLDING PHILIPPINES, INC. (BPMPI) with plant site at the Cavite Economic Zone (MEZ) has filed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) an application for PIONEER STATUS to be granted to its manufacture of micro network controlled structure (MNCS) products based on newness of product and technology, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of Income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Regulations Department of PEZA (Tel. Nos. 551-95-44 and 551-34-57; and telefax 551-3456).

(Sgd.) **LILIA B. DE LIMA**
Director General

(PDI–Feb. 10, 2004)

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**AUCTION**

**www.henrybutcher.com**

**ONLINE AUCTIONS : VIEWING BY APPOINTMENT**

**USED GENERAL ELECTRIC TRANSFORMER (1995)**
Location: Henry Butcher Warehouse, Bo. Mayapa, Canlubang, Laguna
Closing Date: 13 February 2004 - 5:00PM

2500 KVA continuous self cooled; 3500 KVA forced air cooled
Voltage rating 34,500 Volt Input, 480Y/277 Output c/w 34.5 KV
Incoming switch unit & 2 MVA GE Substations

**PACKAGING MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT**
Location: Henry Butcher Warehouse, Bo. Mayapa, Canlubang, Laguna
Closing Date: 19 February 2004 - 6:00PM

FANUC Robotic Arm Palletizer (1999); COLUMBIA L100 Palletizer (1998); (6) ZARPAC Sachet Case Packers (1999)

**HIGH QUALITY USED DATA CARD 7000 SERIES (2000)**
Location: Special Export Processing Zone, North Science Avenue,
Laguna Technopark Inc., Binan, Laguna
Closing Date: 18 February 2004 - 6:00PM

Used to manufacture smart cards: Print Resolution: 1200 dots/in
Engraving Speed: 1400 cards/hr, Photo Image: 250 cards/hr
Bar Codes: 600 cards/hr in vector mode
**For more details please contact Mr. Arvin Cortez at 852 2910/11**
**E-mail: arvin.cortez@henrybutcher.com**

**HENRY BUTCHER**
GoIndustry
HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES INC.
Rm. 102 Jollibee Bldg., 670 Edsa, Pasay City, Philippines
Tel No.: +(63-2) 852-2910 * 11 Fax Nos: +(63-2) 831-4507
E-mail: manila@henrybutcher.com
Website: www.henrybutcher.com/www.goindustry.com

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

## Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

The Provincial Government of Cebu through its BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with "AAA" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Large "B" for Roads, to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Asphalting of Bunlan – Cabutongan Road, Santander, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation for 20% Development Fund under PR# 04-468 dated 02-06-04 and Alobs # 100-04-02-344 dated 02-06-04 in the amount of Three Million Eight Hundred Sixty Six Thousand One Hundred Thirty Three Pesos and 62/100 (P3,866,133.62) and charged against Continuing Appropriation General Fund Proper under PR # 04-467 dated 02-06-04 and Alobs # 100-04-02-346 dated 02-06-04 in the amount of Nine Hundred Seventy Two Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Four Pesos and 47/100 (P972,284.47) with a total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of P4,838,418.09.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

**Major Items of Work Involved**

Item 310 - Bit. Concrete Surface Coarse (Hot Laid, 50 mm thk)

**Minimum Equipment Requirements:**

| Equipment Type | Quantity | |
|---|---|---|
| Asphalt Batching Plant, (Cap. 80 Tons/Hr.) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Asphalt Distributor (Truck Mounted) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Asphalt Paver | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Hydraulic Excavator | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Motor Grader | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Tandem Road Roller (10 Tons) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Vibratory Compactor (15 Tons) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Pneumatic Road Roller (12 Tons) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Water Truck (Cap. 6,000 gals.) | 1 Unit | Owned |
| Dump Trucks, (10 T - 20 T) | 2 Units | Owned |
| Payloader, 2.5 cu.m. | 1 Unit | Owned |

**Schedule for the Procurement Activities:**

| | Dates | Time | Place |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms | Feb. 10-16, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents | Feb. 18, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Issuance of Notice to Eligible Bidders | Feb. 23, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Issuance of Plans and Bid documents | Feb. 24, 2004 | 8:00-5:00 P.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Pre-bidding Conference | Feb. 26, 2004 | 10:00 A.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |
| Public Bidding | March 09, 2004 | 10:00 A.M. | PGSO, BAC Secretariat |

Only Bids within the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Plans and Bid Documents can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P3,000.00

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids, post qualification and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614 / 253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. HABIN
Chairman

(PDI – February 10 & 16, 2004)

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# BUSINESS

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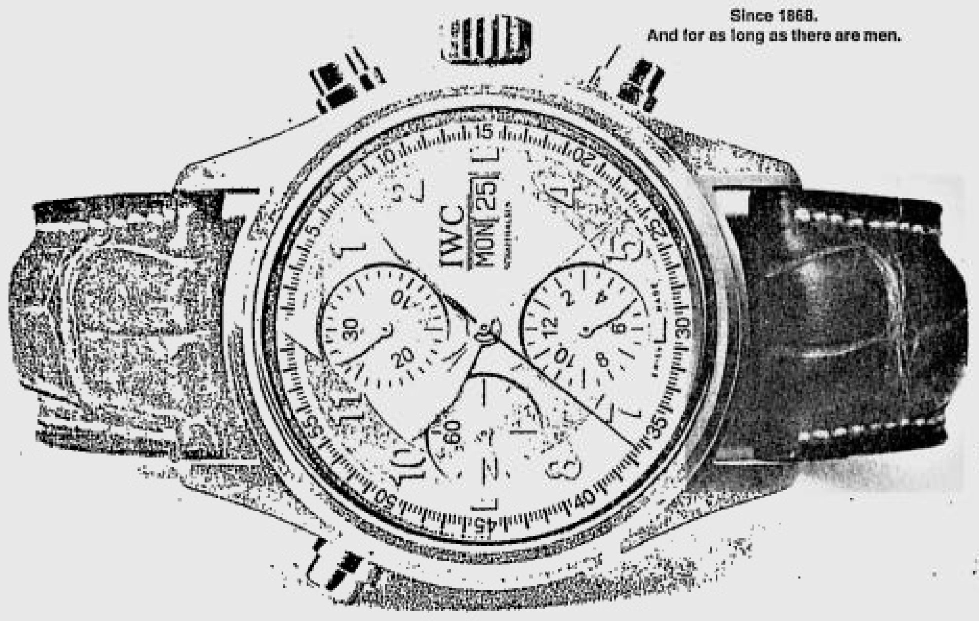

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## Garments industry sees grim 2004

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GARMENTS industry is bracing itself for a difficult 2004 as foreign markets start reducing imports from the Philippines.

The industry earlier projected that revenue for 2004 would grow by 5 percent from the $2.7 billion generated in 2003. But with the reduction in export quotas, especially to the United States, local garments firms now see no growth this year.

Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima said the quota for this year was reduced because a part of this year's allocation was already used up last year.

Purisima added that foreign markets are already preparing for the lifting of the quota system next year.

A quota-free regime means that export allocations given to countries such as the Philippines would be lifted, paving the way for a free-for-all global market.

The Philippines' average quota is 20 million dozens of garments under the critical categories such as pants, T-shirts and jackets, and 50 million dozens for non-critical categories.

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*Editor* **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

# Ephedrine diet pills to be banned soon

## WELL AND GOOD

*Tina Juan*

OVER-THE-COUNTER sales of ephedrine-based diet pills will be banned starting March 1, according to the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA). California already banned the pills on Jan. 1 and the state of New York made them illegal last November. The FDA's decision makes the ban nationwide.

It's about time since in the last 10 years, the FDA has received reports of 150 deaths and 16,000 complaints associated with the use of the stimulant diet pills.

The most famous death was that of 23-year-old Baltimore Oriole baseball pitcher Steve Bechler in February last year, though there was also the highly publicized death of Anne Marie Capati who died while working out in a New York City gym a few years ago. But there's nothing quite like the death of a celebrity to stir up a hornet's nest.

Bechler's death drove home the point that ephedrine diet pills can be lethal. His father testified before the US Congress in July and appealed to the lawmakers to make the pills illegal and "not let my son die in vain."

### Not FDA's fault

A good question to ask is why it took the FDA so long to take action. Well, it's not the FDA's fault.

A 1994 law effectively tied their hands. The "Dietary Supplement and Health Education Act" states that makers of dietary and herbal supplements do not have to prove that their products work or are safe to be able to sell them unlike over-the-counter and prescription drugs, which have to pass a stringent process before they can be sold.

Dietary supplement manufacturers are also not required to report to the government any complaints or deaths due to their products. The FDA had to rely on the reports of doctors and consumers, which could be only the tip of the iceberg. The FDA suspects the voluntary reports account for only one percent of what is actually happening.

> The death of a 23-year-old professional athlete drove home the point that the products can be lethal

It took 10 years for the FDA to gather enough evidence to convince the courts to institute the ban. Sadly, Bechler's death was probably the catalyst the FDA needed to get ephedrine diet pills banned. Supplement manufacturers can still appeal the FDA decision. If they win, the ball will be back in Congress' lap.

### New requirement

According to The Arizona Star, a bill has been sponsored by Sen. Richard Durbin that will require manufacturers of stimulants like ephedrine to provide evidence of the product's safety before it can be sold. As to be expected, supplement manufacturers are not taking it sitting down. Durbin was quoted as saying, "The supplement industry is a multibillion-dollar operation with an army of lobbyists, friends in the highest places in Washington and attack dogs straining at the leash."

Perhaps anticipating the fallout from Bechler's death, some supplement stores voluntarily took ephedrine-based diet pills off the shelves months ago. But just because ephedrine won't be available legally doesn't mean it can't be bought elsewhere like on the black market and over the Internet.

Bangkok pills can still be bought illegally here in the Philippines. I'm sure the same thing will happen with ephedrine. The business will just go underground.

### What you should know

Since it will still be a "buyer beware" market, here's what you need to know about ephedrine diet pills to protect your health.

- Other names for ephedrine are ephedra, ma huang, and Ephedra Sinensis. It is a common ingredient in "fat burners" and "energy pills."
- When ephedrine is combined with other stimulants like caffeine or guarana, its potency is increased but so is the risk of side effects.
- Side effects include high blood pressure, rapid and irregular heart beat, insomnia, nervousness, anxiety, hyperactivity, psychoses, chest pain, tremors, headaches, seizures, stroke and heart attack.
- Ephedrine can aggravate underlying medical conditions like hypertension or heart disease. Capati had mild hypertension. She died of a stroke three months after taking an herbal weight loss supplement that contained ephedra and caffeine.
- People do not always know the condition of their health. For example, you can have hypertension and not know it. According to the Philippine Society of Hypertension, 13 million Filipinos have high blood pressure and half of them were not aware they had it until a complication like a stroke or heart problem occurred. That's why you shouldn't just pop any supplement into your mouth without consulting your doctor.
- Most of the people who reported side effects to the FDA were young healthy individuals below the age of 40.
- 75 percent of cases of adverse effects occurred in women. The FDA said this was because women were the main users of weight-loss supplements, though it might also reflect a difference in the way a woman's body metabolized ephedrine compared to a man's.
- You can take ephedrine for one year without incident, but that is not proof that it is safe for you. Some of the people who died had been taking the product for one year.
- Even if you take the recommended dosage, you might still be susceptible to adverse side effects. The FDA believes some individuals are more sensitive than others.
- Psychiatric effects like mania and psychosis were noted in people who had no family history and also in those with no predisposition to manic depression and mood disorders.

EPHEDRINE/ C3

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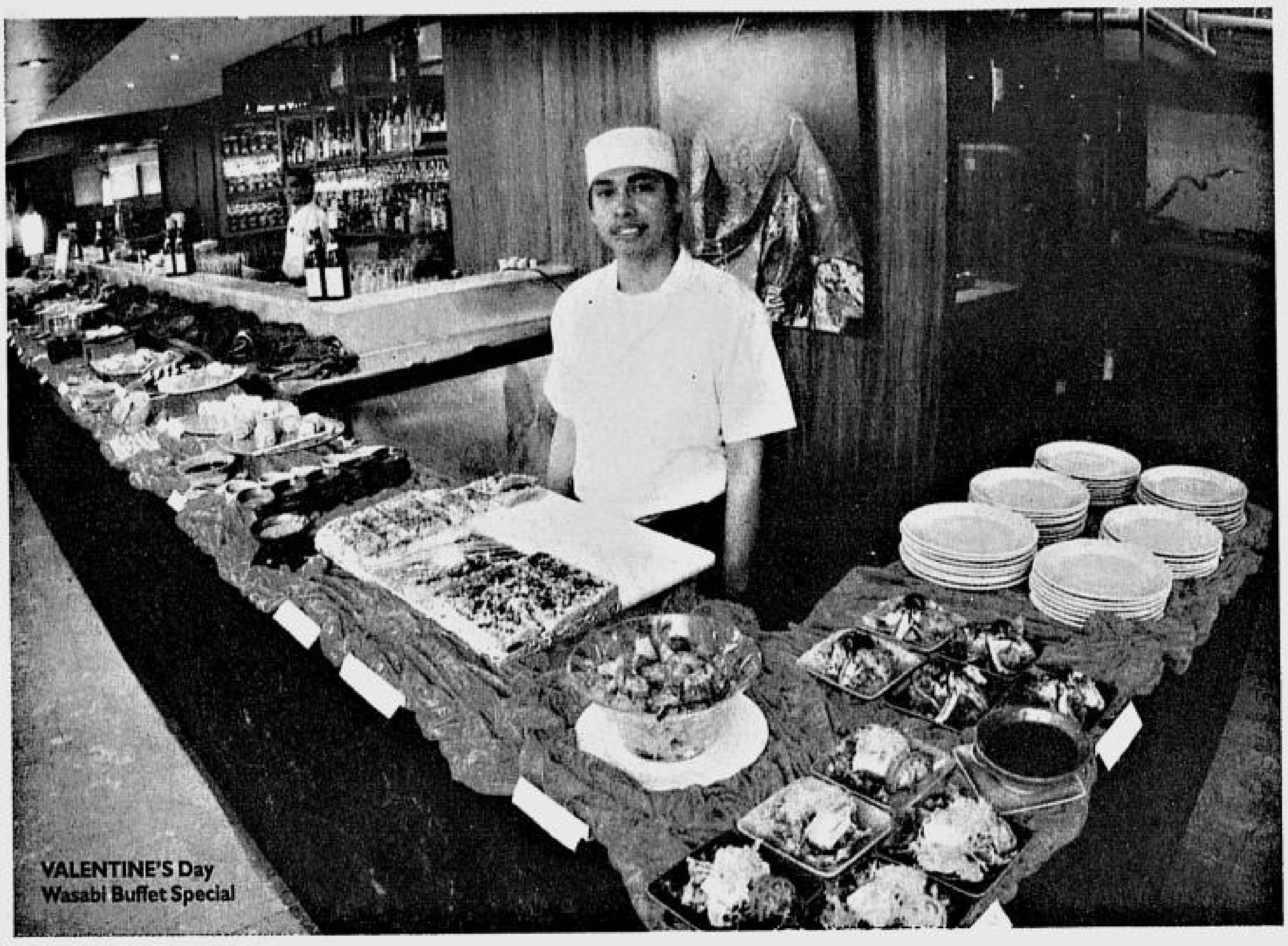
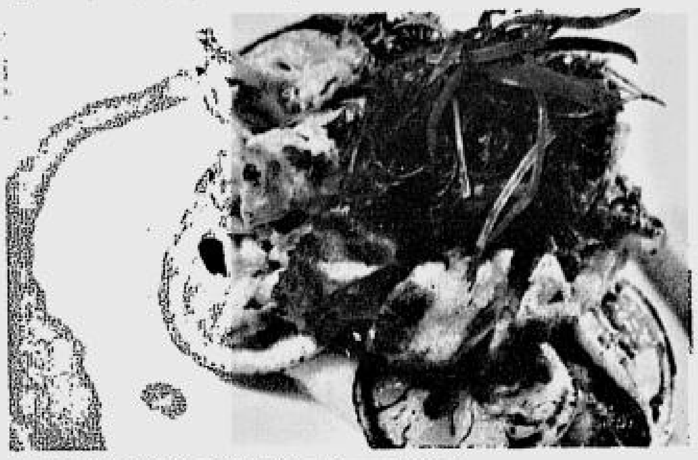
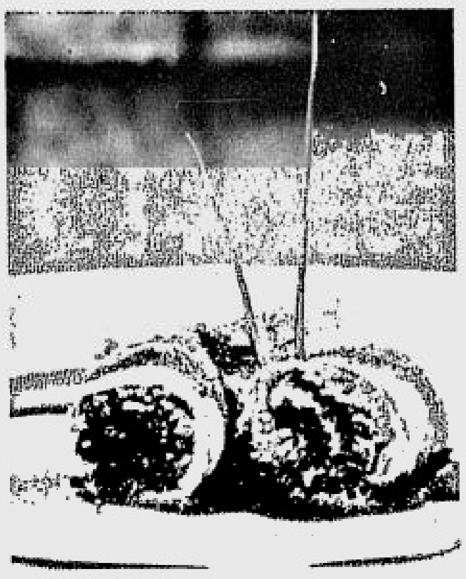


**VALENTINE'S Day** Wasabi Buffet Special



**PRE-VALENTINE SPECIAL: Grilled Wasabi Chicken**



**YUM-YUM.** Inagishinshu Mushi

# Go Japanese on V-Day

## WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

*Maurice Arcache*

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

IT'S Valentine again, *palanggas*. The season of love has arrived. Wasabi, the premier Japanese restaurant, has prepared a pre-Valentine dinner menu for Feb. 13, and offers a romantic toast to all you early bird lovers, *palanggas*.

It starts with a romantic serving of Gratinated Deep Sea Mahi Mahi Fillet with wasabi dressing, and organic vegetables salad.

The main dish will be a choice between Sake Marinated Sea Prawns or Grilled Beef Tenderloin with Red Wine sauce. Cap the night with Wasabi's signature dessert specials. Inclusive of Wasabi's Red cocktail, the package is priced at P750+ per love-person.

And on Valentine's Day when Cupid sends his arrows flying and you are ready to escape the madding crowds of malls and hotels, and looking for a delightful romantic dinner with a difference, Wasabi is offering a special Valentine buffet for Japanese food enthusiasts. For only P850+ per person, you will enjoy a generous serving of Wasabi classics, including those to-die-for rolls in rainbow, avocado, inside-out California, futomaki, soft shell crab; assorted sushi nigiri; fresh sashimi selection and many more. Main items include roast turkey, beef and lamb; shrimp tempura; teriyaki delights; baked scallop special; seafood teppanyaki and Wasabi's signature dish, the renowned, yummy Japanese Paella.

People with a sweet tooth, dahlings, can dig into an exclusive array of desserts, including everyone's favorite mango creme brulée, chocolate tiramisu, assorted cakes and pastries, fruit tartlets, and French-style crepes.

Hey, that ain't bad, huh? Interested? Well, *palanggas*, do call 8404223 for more details. Even free valet parking will be offered and smoking and non-smoking seating is available.

Wasabi is at Olympia Bldg., cor. Makati Ave. and Sto. Tomas St., Makati.

Check them out, lovers. After all, this is your day.

### Lovapalooza Valentine aims for Guinness world record

Forget about date movie, *palanggas*, this is definitely the grand date event of the year! On the eve of Valentine's Day, the best entertainers in the country plus thousands of beautiful couples will gather at the new, bustling romantic strip of Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard to break the barriers and celebrate "love—and Valentine—for free," with millions of other couples nationwide through the Lovapalooza satellite parties. Other couples will be watching the event live on television or even listening to the radio at home.

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Rock-the-floor sounds will be by dance guru **Manolet Dario**, with **Fritz Barth**, NBK DJs. The Ateneo Dance Club will perform.

But what sets this huge event apart is the—hold your breath, *palanggas*—5,000 couples who will, for a minimum of 10 seconds, kiss simultaneously not only to show their love on Valentine's eve, but also to break the Guinness Book of World Record held by a gathering of 4,445 couples who kissed for 10 seconds in Chile.

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CloseUp Lovapalooza's message is loud and clear. "Celebrate love by breaking the barrier of your usual Valentine's date. Celebrate love and kiss for the record."

Yees!, go for it, *palanggas*.

### The Z makes its mark

Nissan's 350Z made its rip-roaring grand entrance in our market. The luxurious sports car was introduced in a fantastic all-day affair, would you believe, at the Le Pavillion.

Naturellement, this brought together our town's big toy lovers, like car enthusiasts, race car aficionados and dreamers of the snazzy Z sports coupe, *palanggas*. The 350Z marked a new shift in Nissan's direction, "that will definitely steer the course of the company to its success."

No less than hotshots like the Minister **Lin Yi Fu**, minister of economic affairs of Taiwan, and Ambassador **Wu Hsin Hsing** of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office were there. After all, Yulon Motor Corporation, the mother company of Nissan, is the biggest automotive company based in Taiwan.

Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. president **Leman Lee** said in his short opening remarks, "The Nissan 350Z is a true sports car, built on the heritage of the Fairlady 240Z. It is the vehicle that changed the way people looked at Nissan. 350Z owners will be enamored with the car at first sight, and will continue loving it forever."

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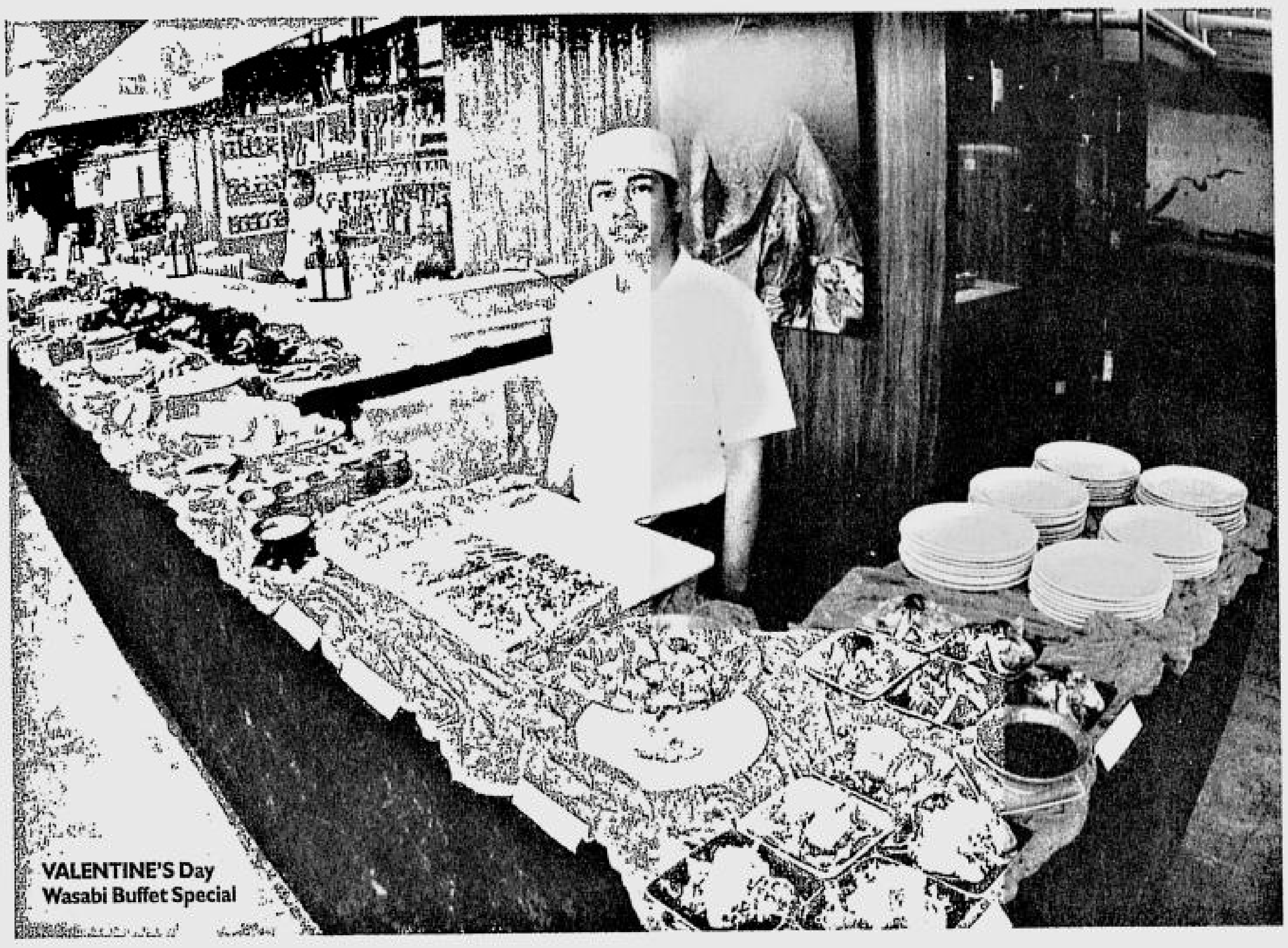
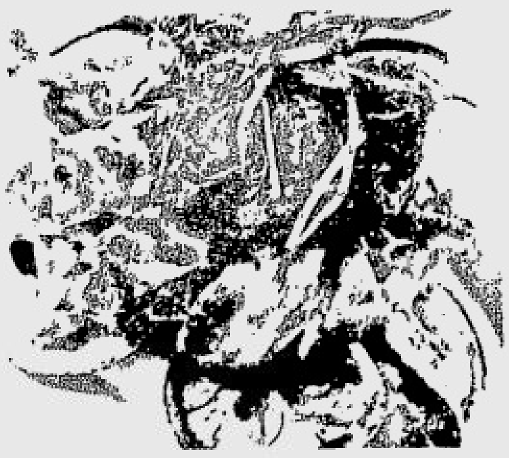
**THEY** love snazzy cars. Sonny Liwanag, Sophie de los Reyes and George See



VALENTINE'S Day Wasabi Buffet Special



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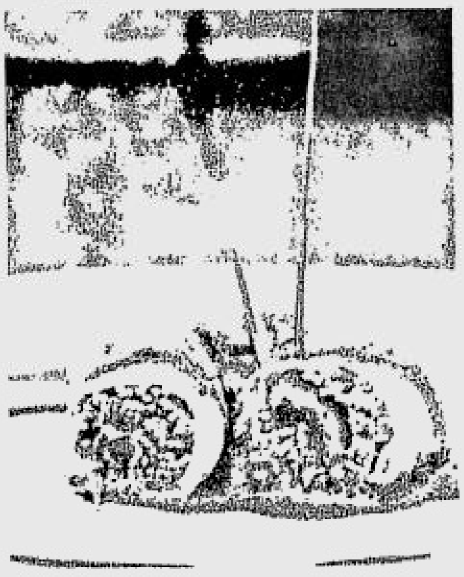

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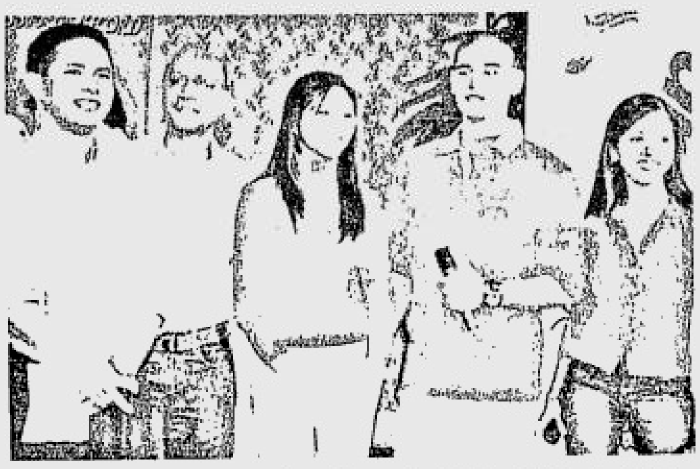

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RESENSA Green Iced Tea is a refreshing drink made from 100-percent natural green tea powder and completely pesticide-free.

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Green tea is reputedly rich in epigallocatechin gallate or EGCG, considered the most potent antioxidant, and can lower cholesterol, increase the body's rate of burning calories and enhance fat oxidation.

Antioxidants help protect the body from potentially harmful substances such as free radicals, which are naturally produced by the body but can damage tissues, cells and genes. They help lower blood pressure, reduce blood sugar and fight cancer.

Antioxidants protect cells from potentially damaging by-products created when oxygen is metabolized or used by the body. A growing body of research suggests antioxidant-rich foods and beverages may help prevent heart disease.

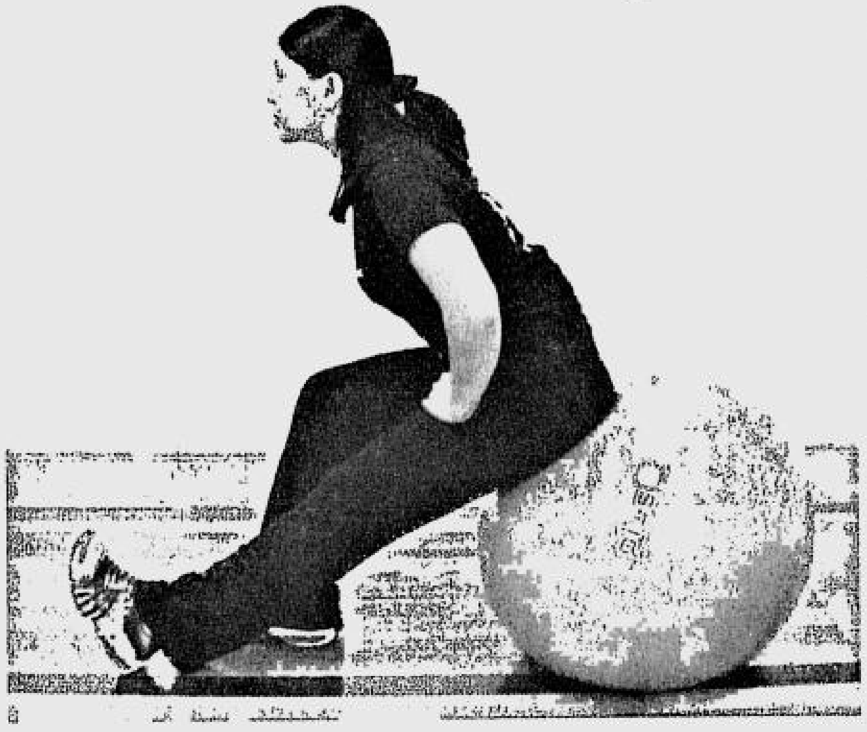
Green tea may also help improve skin texture and fight cavities and tooth decay.

Resensa Green Iced Tea, which can be enjoyed by people of all ages, comes in one-liter pouches (P60 each), one pack with six one-liter pouches (P360 each), six pack with 36 one-liter pouches (P2,160 each) and the Business Pack with six cartons (P12,960 each).

Call 9150628 to 29 or visit www. resensa.com.

## EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

# *Seated hamstring stretch on stability ball*



THIS EXERCISE stretches the hamstrings or muscles at the back of the thighs.

**Equipment:**

Stability ball. As a substitute, you can use a chair.

**Exercise technique:**

1. Sit at the edge of the ball with one leg extended straight in front of you and the foot flexed.
2. Bend forward from the hip until you feel the stretch at the back of the thigh.
3. Hold the stretch for the desired length of time, then repeat with the other leg.

**Performance tips:**

1. Lean forward from the hip, not the waist. Keep your chest open.
2. To increase the stretch, you can reach for the toes of your right leg with your right hand.
3. Continue breathing as you hold the stretch.

**Repetitions:**

Hold for 10-30 seconds. Do once or twice.

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# Ephedrine diet pills to be banned soon

From page C1

## Safety guidelines

If, in spite of all these warnings, you still decide to take illegally bought ephedrine diet pills, then at least try to follow these guidelines:

- Do not take products that contain both ephedrine and caffeine. Do not take ephedrine and continue to drink coffee or other drinks with caffeine. Mixing ephedrine and caffeine produces an effect similar to using amphetamines.
- Do not take products that have more than eight milligrams per dose.
- Do not take more than 24 milligrams in 24 hours.
- Do not use the supplements for more than seven days.
- Do not use ephedrine if you have heart disease, hypertension, thyroid disease, diabetes, enlarged prostate, anxiety or glaucoma.

Aside from the fact that ephedrine will most likely be available in the black market, taking the supplement off the market may not make it that much safer for consumers since manufacturers are already selling "ephedra-free" diet pills, which may also have adverse side effects. Next week, let's take a closer look at these products.

*Note: The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Philippines (AFPP) will hold a one-day fitness seminar on Feb. 21, University of the Philippines-Diliman. Topics include: Conditioning for Badminton, Fad Diets Unveiled, Yoga for Beginners and Sports Conditioning Drill. Call 8136077 or text 0917-5181202.*

*Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info*

# Eyewear for people who play hard

FRED Uytengsu Jr., family man and Alaska Milk president, is a sport enthusiast who has spent the last four years rigorously training for the triathlon.

The multi-sport event that includes swimming, biking and running, is a very demanding and exhausting activity, Uytengsu said. Of the four different triathlon categories, he said he preferred the Olympic distance, the most common of all triathlon races. It includes a 1.5-km swim, 40-km biking and a 10-km run.

FRED Uytengsu Jr. wearing Oakley shades

The Alaska executive makes sure he has the right gear for the demanding competition. In the case of the triathlon, proper eyewear is important.

Uytengsu has relied on Oakley eyewear in his races. He said he was impressed by the quality of Oakley lenses which gave him great vision and adequate protection.

he lenses didn't fog when wet and water didn't stick to the lenses for a constantly unobstructed vision. Uytengsu added they also look good.

Protecting the eyes from the sun is as important using suntan lotion to prevent the skin from getting burned.

Oakley eyepieces are available at Almeda Optical, Executive Optical, Magno Optical, Optical Works, Perez Optical, Unique Vision, Siapno-Tada, Ideal Vision Center, Yes, George Optical, Sarabia Optical and Gem Time Plus.

Other Oakley premium items such as timepieces, apparel, footwear and accessories are exclusively available at Rustan's (Makati, Alabang Town Center and Shangri-La Plaza), G-force (Podium and Rockwell), T102 (Greenbelt 3), Royal Sporting House and Olympic Village.

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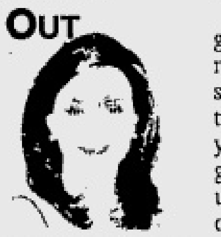
# Fresh and natural beauty aids

AT THE GROCERY one Sunday morning, I was approached by a woman who asked what kind of milk was needed for a face and body wash—was it fresh, canned or condensed? After she left, yet another woman asked what kind of sugar was needed for a fairly effective exfoliation scrub.

**INSIDE OUT**



*Cory Quirino*

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Your garden and your kitchen can give you a harvest of wonders

## Undiscovered wonders

There are many ingredients, fresh and natural ones, you can source directly from the kitchen. Or, better yet, your garden can give you a harvest of undiscovered wonders.

**Basic ingredients:**

- sugar (white, brown or muscovado)
- honey
- salt (sea salt is best)
- milk (fresh milk is better but other kinds are okay)
- oil (olive, virgin coco, soya or even cooking oil)
- water (purified, distilled, alkaline, mineral)
- baking soda
- oatmeal
- ice cubes
- tea bags (any herbal preparation)
- veggies (cucumber, carrots, beets, potato, *singkamas*)
- herbs (basil, cinnamon, mint)
- fruits (avocado, papaya, apple, lemon, cranberry, coconut)
- flowers (roses, nasturtium, marigold)
- others (loofah, towelettes, river rocks, cornstarch)

**Facial wash:** 1 cup of fresh milk (whether cow, carabao or goat) is all you need for a luxurious, softening, gentle face cleansing regimen once a week. It will gently exfoliate your dead skin without any harsh side effects. You may leave it on your face for two minutes. Then rinse with cool water to close your pores.

**Beauty masks:** Raw oatmeal is still the best mask for oily skin. Mix 3 tbsp in 2 tbsp of cold water and apply directly to the face. Leave on for 5 minutes or until the mask hardens. Rinse with cool water. You will immediately feel your face tightening.

Mashed ripe avocado is still my favorite mask for dry skin. Simply apply on clean skin and allow its rich oils to moisturize your face. Rinse with cool water.

**Body polish:** A loofah or scrub glove (from Body Shop) must be a regular item at bath time. Before your soaping and sudsing ritual, put on your glove, dip it in olive oil, then rub gently from feet to neck. Use a gentle creamy soap like Dove at this time. Your skin is guaranteed to feel soft instantly. This regimen is good for both men and women.

Men, in general, much prefer a salt scrub to remove stubborn dead skin. And because their skin is thicker than women's, a firmer but not harsher rub is suggested. Salt can be mixed with any kind of oil, though virgin coco or olive oil is recommended.

**Feet first:** Feet need as much attention as the rest of the body. Sometimes a five-minute dip in a bowl of castor oil is enough to soften the soles of the feet. Better yet, an overnight soak with socks on will keep them soft.

**Hands on:** Your hands can age faster than your face, so, include them in your castor oil ritual. It is best to moisturize your hands 3-4 times a day with a light cream whenever possible, especially after washing your hands.

**Eyes bright:** Juice up on carrot, two times a week. Some don't believe in its benefits but others are staunch advocates. At any rate, the best boost to your eyes is a good night's sleep (especially before midnight).

A reminder: No matter how religiously you follow a health and beauty regimen, remember that you are only addressing the body. Even the most expensive of creams cannot replace a radiant aura.

A restless spirit, a troubled mind and an ailing heart will show. A calm, peaceful and loving self is the best "attire" anyone can wear.

## Mood lifter

Your hands touching the earth, sit against a big tree with your back aligned to its trunk. Close your eyes and simply let go. Forget your worries and woes for a moment. Now imagine your cares leaving you from the soles of your feet, your back and hands. Allow the tree and the earth to absorb your negative feelings. Breathe slowly. Keep still for 10 minutes.

Affirm: "Today's woes are gone from me for I am now healed. And so it is."

More recipes for body and soul soon.

Love and light!

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# A challenge to readers to think

Part 2

**INNER AWARENESS**

*Jaime T. Licauco*

The book has answers to religious questions that are different from traditional Church teachings

TO MAKE the book ["On Christianity, New Age and Reincarnation (New Perspectives on Old Religious Issues)"] interesting and titillating enough for the average reader, I even included answers to such intriguing questions as, "What was really the fruit of the tree of knowledge that Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat in the Garden of Eden?" Also, "Was there really a romantic relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene?" "Where did Jesus Christ get all those new teachings he was preaching about?" and many others.

After I had put together all the materials for this book, and read them as a whole, I knew that I had written an explosive book, because it contained topics and answers to religious questions that were different from the traditional teachings of the Church and yet were not really irreconcilable with them.

For those who are used to hearing only the official answer to those questions, this book may be mentally disturbing, as Sir Jason Winters pointed out in his Foreword. But those who are searching for a more satisfactory explanation to them will find the book a great source of intellectual delight.

In anticipation of the objections that will surely be raised by the religiously conservative readers, I have included six pages of numerous bibliography and references so that they can check out the sources I have used in writing this book. And there are indeed a lot of them.

I hope that these readers will take time to read some of these references. They will find that I have said nothing new in this book. These have been said before and probably said much more powerfully by others. But the average Filipino reader' has no access to these sources. I hope to fill the gap in information with this book.

Finally, I would like to explain why I have dedicated this book to Socrates, the great ancient Greek Philosopher, who was considered by the Oracle of Delphi to be the wisest of men.

I consider myself in the same situation as Socrates 2,400 years ago. He used to question the religious assumptions and political beliefs of his people. They considered him a pest, a gadfly—and so they put him to trial and condemned him to death by drinking hemlock, a powerful poison. He was falsely accused of teaching false gods and corrupting the youth. If he had lived during the Middle Ages, he would have been burned at the stakes, accused of witchcraft; and if he had lived in this century, he would have been accused of engaging in New Age and occult practices.

Like Socrates, my objective in writing this book is not to change people's religious beliefs, but simply to challenge them to think through the various assumptions they make regarding their religion to see if they still make sense to them. If they do not, they had better look elsewhere for better answers, instead of following blindly religious authorities who may be as blind as themselves. For as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Conformity in behavior is a human necessity, but conformity in ideas a human danger."

*The new book is now available in all branches of National Book Store, PowerBooks and Mag:net.*

*Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 . E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.*

# Weight loss secrets

THE FIRST 2004 edition of the Healthy Options News Digest offers suggestions on how readers can adopt safe and natural measures to look and feel fabulous.

The cover story of the January/February 2004 issue of Healthy Options News Digest —"Weight Loss Secrets"—lists nine ways to go from thick to thin. The issue also has news updates.

The publication is free to customers of Healthy Options, the natural products store.

Other informative articles include "The Anti-Inflammation Diet", "White Foods: Should You Avoid Them?", "Inflammatory Syndrome: Root of All Evil?", "Resisting Antibiotics Naturally" and "Pregnancy: Are You High-Risk?"

"Health News" has more news and tidbits for healthy living.

The new Healthy Options News Digest are available at Healthy Options stores at Shangri-La Plaza Mall Edsa, Rustan's Makati, Greenbelt Makati; Festival Supermall Alabang, SM City North Edsa, SM City Manila, SM Megamall, SM City Pampanga, Ayala Center Cebu and SM City Bicutan.

Visit www.healthyoptions.com.ph

# *New 'cure' for menopause blues*

WOMEN experiencing menopausal symptoms may find relief in a new "therapy."

The "cure" is HRT—Humor Replacement Therapy. It is not a drug but a musical comedy—"Menopause, the Musical." Written and produced by Jeannie Linders, a 54-year-old Florida event marketer, it presents the lighter side of an inevitable phase for women.

The musical is the latest project of Bahaghari Productions, a team of women behind "Ilusioné" and "Late Nite Catechism." The group is composed of Margie Moran Floirendo, Niña Romualdez, Carmita Francisco and Maan Hontiveros. Co-producers are Precy Florentino and Edith Alcantara of Music Museum.

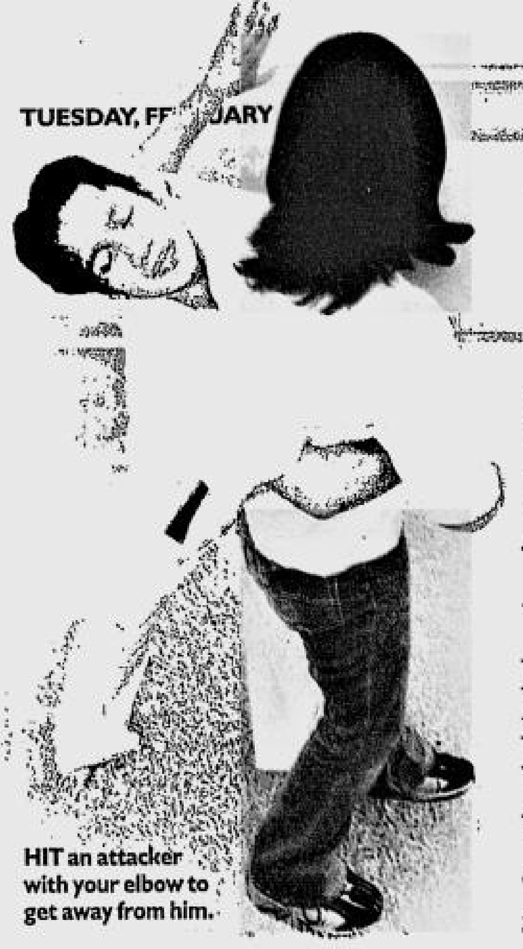
The Philippine Society of Climacteric Medicine, an organization of physicians that specializes in menopause, among others, has endorsed the production.

Among the members of the cast of the musical set in New York are Sheila Francisco, Leah Navarro, Mitch Valdes and Nanette Inventor. Leo Rialp directs.

"Menopause, the Musical" will run Fridays and Saturdays, March 5-April 3, at the Music Museum, Greenhills. Sponsors are Smart, Wyeth, Schering Phil. Corp., Nutren, Carnation, Calcium Plus, Imedeen and PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER.

Tickets are available at all Ticketworld outlets or through Ticketworld. Call 8919999, 7210635 or 7216726.

# LIFESTYLE



**HIT** an attacker with your elbow to get away from him.

# Self-defense for you and me

## Dulac, an indigenous form of martial arts, teaches effective techniques against armed and unarmed street attacks

**Text by Rowena C. Burgos**
**Photos by Romy Homillada**

IT'S late and you're on your way home after work. You feel just a tad nervous as you walk down a deserted street toward your house. Then an attacker approaches you. Would you know how to defend yourself? Would you be strong enough to stop him?

To avoid that feeling of vulnerability, an increasing number of women are enrolling in self-defense classes like Dulac, which was developed by Antonio R. Vasquez III in 1980.

A Bicolano term for fierce fighting, Dulac provides the all-important aspects of a cardiovascular workout while teaching an indigenous form of martial arts. It involves bare hand self-defense techniques, which are effective against armed and unarmed attackers and multiple attackers.

One can also learn to deal with situations involving rape/molestation, cellphone/bag/jewelry snatching and armed hostage-taking. Cus-

SELF-DEFENSE/ D3

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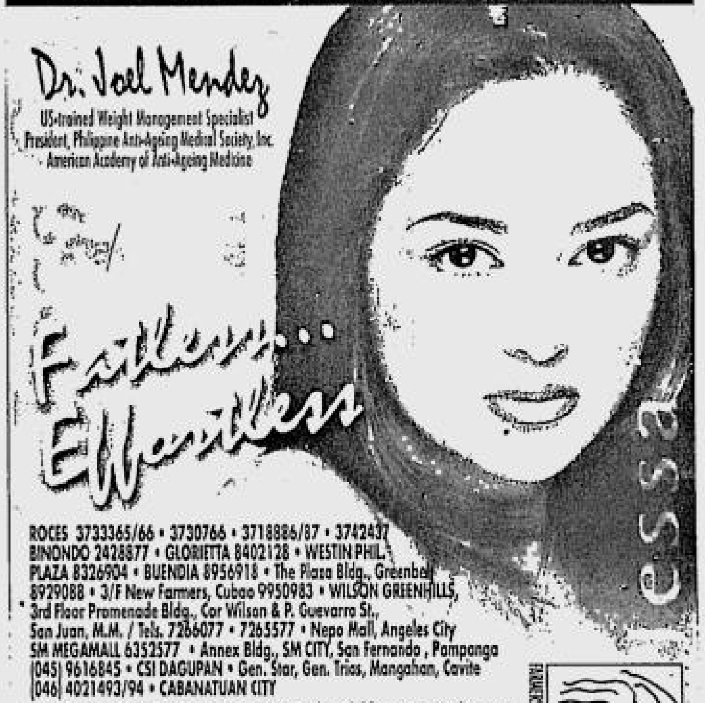

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Dr. Joel Mendez is inviting everybody to attend the First Annual Convention of the Phil. Anti-Ageing Medical Society on Feb. 27, 2004 @ 7:00am to 5:00pm at the Westin Phil. Plaza Hotel
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ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
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Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

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Masters in Cake Decorating, Wilton School, Chicago, U.S.A., 1974 under Martha & Stanley Wilton
Graduate : Chicago School of Cooking and Catering
Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder with Edna, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

FEB 11, 18, 25 WED 9:00 TO 5:00 PM - **FONDANT ICING AND GUMPASTE FLOWERS COURSE P2,500** - INCLUDING INGREDIENTS, LUNCH AND SNACK. **LESSON 1** DAISY, TULIP, SAMPAGUITA, APPLE BLOSSOM AND SWEET PEA, MAKE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LEAVES, STAMENS. CALYX FOR FUTURE USE. **LESSON 2**- CAKE (STYRO) COVERED WITH FONDANT ICING AND "CUT GLASS" TECHNIQUE. MAKE GUMAMELA; LILIES, STEPHANOTIS; CHRYSANTHEMUM, CARNATION, DAFFODIL; WILTON ROSE; VICTORIA ROSE. **LESSON 3** ORCHID, GUMPASTE RIBBONS AND SWAGS PREPARATION AND DECORATION OF FONDANT WEDDING CAKE (FOR TAKE HOME). BY **LENI R. ARAULLO.**

FEB 12 THU 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - **OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR**, LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES. MOZZARELLA TOPPED-BIG AND THICK CRUST PIZZA(BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN), THIN CRUST PIZZA WITH DIFFERENT TOPPINGS. FETTUCINE ALFREDO; SPAGHETTI; CARBONARA; BREADED VEAL STEAKS WITH LEMON, PEACH-FILLED CREPES WITH FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS AND SANDWICHES P980.

FEBRUARY 14, 28 MARCH 6, 13 - 4 SATURDAYS, 9:00 TO 5:00 P.M - **MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING,** P2,900 INCLUDING INGREDIENTS. LUNCH AND SNACK. ( EXPECT DECORATING MATERIALS LIKE PIPING BAGS, TIPS, ETC. AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE CULINARY STUDIO OR BRING YOUR OWN). **LESSON 1** FLUFFY BUTTER CREAM ICING. TECHNIQUES IN COLORING, BORDERS. SHELL, ROPE; STAR; LEAF, ZIGZAG "E" MOTION. FLEUR DE LIZ MAKE GARLANDS AND SWAGS: BASKET WEAVING; LATTICE DESIGN. 12 DIFFERENT DESIGNS FOR TOP AND SIDES OF CAKE. DIRECT PIPING OF CAKE OF ROSE BOUQUET, SWEET PEA CARNATION **LESSON 2** - 5 KINDS OF ICING INCLUDING MARSHMALLOW, ROYAL TO MAKE SUGAR FLOWERS ON NAILS, TOOTHPICK, FLORAL WIRE LEARN SUGAR MOLDING CAKES FAN, BOOTIES; BASKET CRIB; HEART, MARY'S HEAD, THELION KING; DVD MUSICAL DESIGN CAKE; TWO ADULT "SEXY" CAKES EACH STUDENT MUST BRING TRAY/BOX TO TAKE HOME CAKES. **LESSON 3** MARZIPAN (FREE HAND) MOLDING AND PAINTING OF FRUITS; FIGURES AND VEGETABLES. LEARN THE MARZIPAN ROSE, FIGURE AND FRUIT PIPING. DECORATE DIFFERNT DESIGNS ON MUFFINS FOR INDIVIDUAL SERVINGS, WHICH HOTELS AND LUXURY LINERS SERVE **LESSON 4** HOW TO PREPARE DEBUTANT/WEDDING CAKES; TIERD; STACKED, ETC EACH STUDENT WILL DESIGN AND DECORATE A WEDDING CAKE, (STYRO) TO BRING HOME PLS BRING TRAY/BOX BY **LENI R. ARAULLO.**

FEB 15 - SUN 2:00 TO 5:30 P.M.- **7 MONEY MAKING SAUSAGE COURSE I - GERMAN (BRATWURST)** HUNGARIAN; KIELBASA, MEXICAN L.A., GREEK; SHEBOYGAN BRATS OF WISCONSIN CHORIZO MACAO. BAGUIO SAUSAGES BONUS ATCHARA AND HOT POTATO SALAD **P 980** BY **LENI R. ARAULLO.**

FEB 16 MONDAY - 2:30 TO 5:30 P.M. - **UBE CHIFFON CAKE; ROCKY ROAD;** MOIST CHOCOLATE CAKE. FOOD FOR THE GODS AND WALNUT BROWNIES PLUS TIPS ON CONVERTING CAKES INTO JELLY ROLLS AND MUFFINS DELICIOUS CAKES SOLD IN TOP BAKESHOPS! ALL CAKES WITH DIFFERENT ICINGS! P980.

FEB 17- TUE 2:30 TO 5:30 P.M. - **SPECIAL LESSON ON MORE MONEY MAKING OPPORTUNITIES.** SAVORY STYLE FRIED CHICKEN, ROAST MONTEREY PORK LIEMPO. MRS. OLIVIA TEE'S FOOKIEN STYLE AMOY FRESH LUMPIA, PORK SIOMAI WITH QUAIL EGGS HONG KONG SHRIMP SIOMAI. HACAO (SHRIMP DUMPLING WITH HOMEMADE CLEAR WRAPPER). P980

FEB 19 & 26 THU 2:30 TO 5:30 P.M. - **MAKE MONEY BY LEARNING 15 DELICIOUS RECIPES IN TWO LESSONS.** P1,500 INCLUDING INGREDIENTS. A SPECIAL FRUIT CAKE, 3 VERSIONS OF BROWNIES, (DOUBLE CHOCOLATE FUDGE; CHOCO-CARAMEL FUDGE; WALNUT TOPPED DARK AND LIGHT BARS) 5 DIFFERENT KINDS OF WELL-KNOWN MUFFINS; 5 DIFFERENT KINDS OF CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES, MACADAMIA NUT COOKIES FOR TEENAGERS AND ABOVE

FEB 20 - FRI 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - **LOURDES FAT CRABS COOKED IN GINGER GARLIC SPRITE.** SIZZLING CHINESE STYLE MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN; SHRIMP BALLS IN NEST WITH SWEET AND SOUR SAUCE; HONGKONG STYLE ASSORTED VEGETABLE PLATTER; MAGNOLIA STIR FRIED CHICKEN BREAST WITH CASOY. LAPU-LAPU FILLET IN CAMPBELLS CREAM OF CORN SAUCE; STUFFED CRAB CLAWS P980.

FEB. 22 - SUN 2:00 TO 5:30 PM - **6 MONEY MAKING SAUSAGE COURSES 2,** - P980. CHINESE SWEET SAUSAGE (LOP CHONG. ALSO USED FOR SIOPAO FILLING). PHIL. ANISADO LONGANIZA; JAPANESE CHICKEN SHITAKE (MUSHROOM) SAUSAGE, PERUVIAN HOT LINKS, CHEROKEE INDIAN SAUSAGE, SMOKED BRATWURST. BY LENI R. ARAULLO. WHO TAUGHT AND SOLD HAM AND SAUSAGES TO HOTELS & RESTAURANTS SINCE 1963.

FEB 23 MON 2:30 TO 6:00 PM - **VERY SALEABLE FRIED CHICKEN EMPANADA,** PUTO PAO, SUPERSOFT MAMON & BUTTERSLICE: COCONUT MACAROONS. CHICKEN PIES IN MUFFIN CUPS. IDEAL FOR HOME BUSINESS **P980.**

FEB. 24 TUE 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - **MONEY-MAKING PERFECT DOUGHNUTS!** LEARN & DECORATE OVER 20 DIFFERENT TOPPINGS WITH FILLING. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF SPANISH CHURROS AND THICK CHOCOLATE NO OVEN NOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED **P 980.**

FEB 27 FRI - 2:30 TO 6:00 PM - **2 KINDS OF ROAST BEEF.** MONTEREY STANDING RIB-ROAST AND BACON-WRAPPED BONELESS ROAST WITH GRAVY, CREMA DE FRUTA; SIZZLING SHRIMPS IN GARLIC SAUCE; FRIED SQUID RINGS, CHICKEN ALEXANDER, SEAFOOD MEDLEY SOUP SERVED ON CRUSTY BREADBOWL FROM FRENCH BAKER. **P 980.**

FEB 29 SUN - 2:00 TO 5:30 PM **MONEY-MAKING SAUSAGES COURSE 3,** P980 LEARN 7 OF YOUR FAVORITE FOOTLONG HOTDOGS, BEEF SAUSAGE JERKY USING ("VIPPI") CASING USED FOR HOTDOG-MAKING. WHOLE CORNED BEEF SERVED IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS, PORK HAMONADO % BEEF DE RECADO, THE BEST PAMPANGO PORK TOCINO, LONGANIZA LUCBAN P 980. BY **LENI R. ARAULLO.**

MAR 1 MON 2:30 TO 6:15 PM - **LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS.** CHEESEROLLS, SPECIAL EGG PAN DE SAL. PAN DE SAL WITH FILLING; CINNAMON ROLLS; BREAD-BAKING MADE EASY! **P 980.**

MAR 2 TUE 2:30 TO 6:00 PM - **9 SPECIAL BARBECUE; BEEF TERIYAKI IN SKEWERS; PORK SPARERIBS WITH HOISIN SAUCE.** MAGNOLIA CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS IN HONEY SAUCE; (SATE A JAM) CHICKEN SKEWERS IN PEANUT SAUCE. BEEF RIBS WITH PEKING NOODLES; DELICIOUS PORK SPARERIBS; NEW KOREAN BEEF BARBECUE; NASI GORENG (INDONESIAN FRIED RICE); FERNANDO MIGUEL ERENETA CHICKEN HONEY; THE BEST PORK BARBECUE WITH SPECIAL PEANUT SAUCE **P 980.**

MAR 8 MON 2:30 TO 6:15 PM - **LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER!** THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI, KUA PAO (PEKING SIOPAO WITH MEAT FILLING & PICKELED MUSTASA), FISH HEAD SOUP, CAMARON RELLENADO, QUIKIAM WITH RADISH SALAD, STEAMED LAPULAPU P 980.

MAR 9 TUE 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - **MONEY-MAKING CHINESE FAST-FOOD RECIPES.** WONTON NOODLE SOUP; MAKI SOUP: FRIED LOMI, KUCHAY DUMPLINGS; PORK CURRY OVER RICE; SHRIMP FRIED RICE **P 980**

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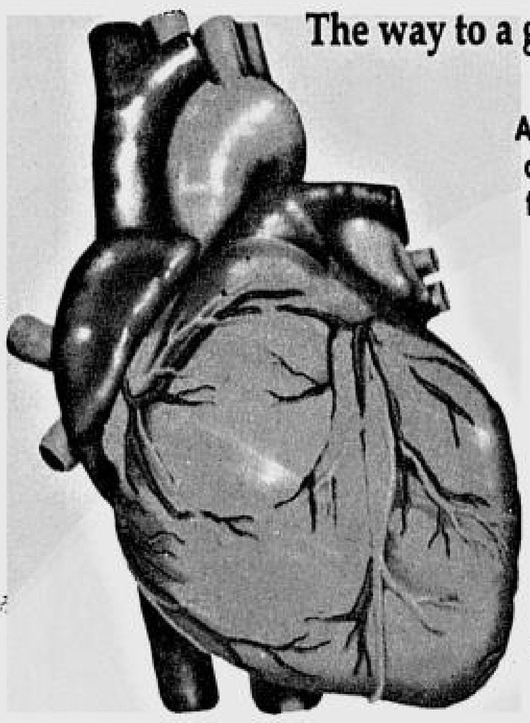
Your Heart Can't Stomach Your Guts!

The way to a good heart is via a healthy stomach



The approved National Heart Foundation, American Heart Association and USFDA Statement of Product Claim reads "Eating soluble fiber from foods such as Psyllium husk as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol together with regular exercise may reduce the risk of heart diseases"

C-Lium FIBRE

100% NATURAL AND ORGANIC
FIBER SUPPLEMENT, NO ADDITIVES,
NO SWEETENERS, NO CHOLESTEROL, GLUTEN FREE
GLYCEIMIC INDEX (GI) LOW

C-Lium © Fibre is 100% psyllium husks the highest source of soluble fiber, It's a natural fat absorber and helps reduce cholesterol by binding with cholesterol secreted in bile acids and excretes it before its absorbed into the bloddstream. The soluble fiber in 1 tablespoon of C-Lium © Fibre is equivalent to 28 tablespoons of oats. Helps remove cholesterol, even better.

C-Lium © Fibre is a pre-need and multi tasking fiber which helps reduce the risk of heart disease, helps remove cholesterol, helps reduce weight, helps eliminate constipation, helps regulate the bowel movement, cleans the colon and intestine of waste and toxins helps control blood sugar and constributes to achieving well-being for the whole family.

Psyllium husks is endorsed by:
USFDA, ATKINS Diet, South Beach Diet
National Heart Foundation
American Heart Association
HALAL
BFAD Approved FR 38176
AVAILABLE FROM:
mercury drug
AND OTHER LEADING PHARMACIES · EMILENE'S PHARMACY

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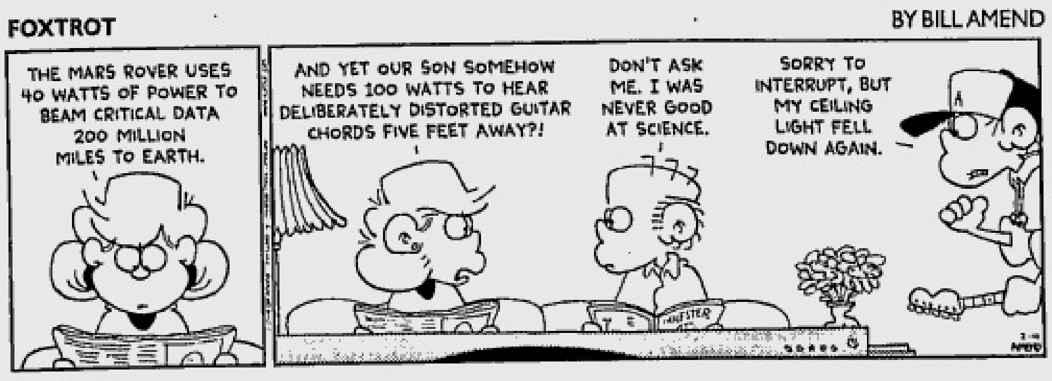
Webpage: www.cliumfibre.com

RECOMMENDED BY GASTROENTEROLOGISTS, MEDICAL AND HEALTH PRACTITIONERS.

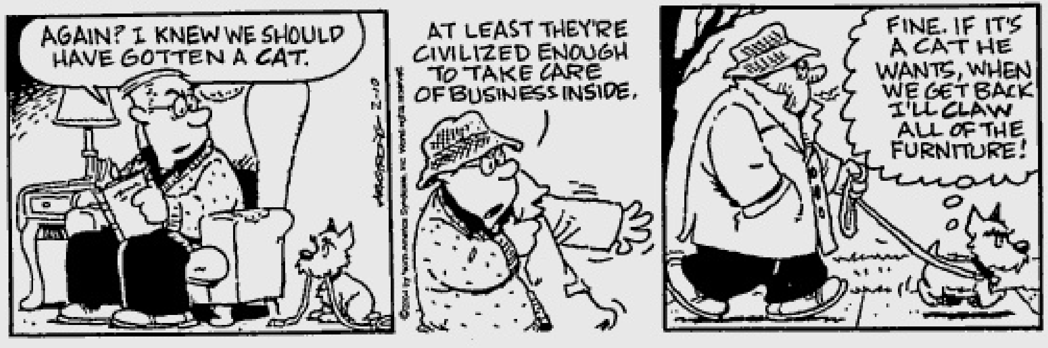
**FOXTROT**

BY BILL AMEND


THE MARS ROVER USES 40 WATTS OF POWER TO BEAM CRITICAL DATA 200 MILLION MILES TO EARTH.
AND YET OUR SON SOMEHOW NEEDS 100 WATTS TO HEAR DELIBERATELY DISTORTED GUITAR CHORDS FIVE FEET AWAY?!
DON'T ASK ME. I WAS NEVER GOOD AT SCIENCE.
SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT MY CEILING LIGHT FELL DOWN AGAIN.

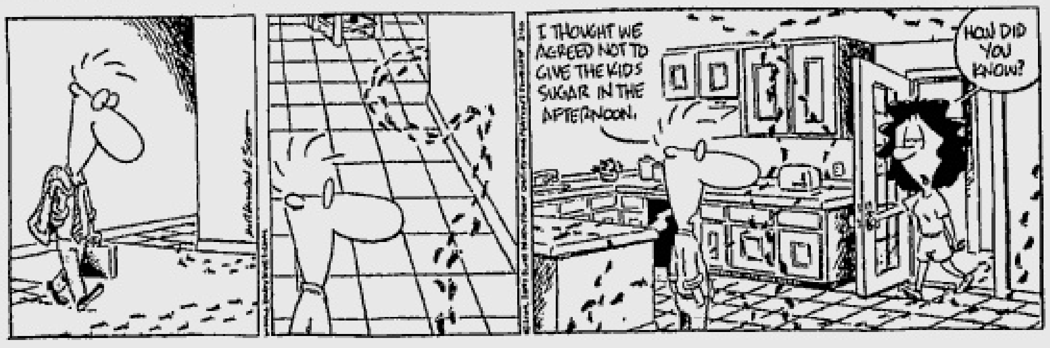
**MARVIN**

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


AGAIN? I KNEW WE SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN A CAT.
AT LEAST THEY'RE CIVILIZED ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS INSIDE.
FINE. IF IT'S A CAT HE WANTS, WHEN WE GET BACK I'LL CLAW ALL OF THE FURNITURE!

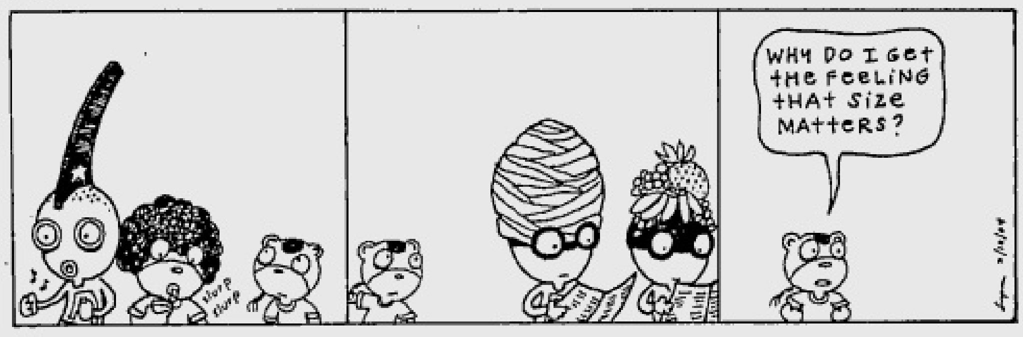
**BABY BLUES**

BY JERRY SCOTT


I THOUGHT WE AGREED NOT TO GIVE THE KIDS SUGAR IN THE AFTERNOON.
HOW DID YOU KNOW?

**ATOMO AND WEBOY**

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHY DO I GET THE FEELING THAT SIZE MATTERS?

# HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You're confident, and this inspires others to believe in you. You want to be appreciated by the best. Sometimes your individuality sets you apart; nevertheless, whatever you do, you touch the hearts of those around you. You have a strong sense of responsibility. This year you will wrap up an important cycle in your life.

**Birthdate of:** Leontyne Price, singer; Laura Dern, actress; Roberta Flack, singer.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** You might have to confront the power of a group or several people that you deal with every day. If so, make your intentions very clear.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Don't hesitate to seize any opportunities that come your way today, especially to wield power in a creative way . It's important to use this power to benefit others as well as yourself.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** You are doing some deep thinking about philosophy, religion and other cultures. The only conclusion to draw it that whatever we do to others is eventually done to us.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** This is a wonderful day for research or investigation. you'll leave no stone unturned. Psychology, criminology and the occult are of particular interest.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** You have the power to make changes in your relationships with others now. Use this power for the improvement of everyone and the general good. (This way you will ultimately benefit as well.)

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** This is a good day to clean up situations that are messy and getting out of hand. In particular, attack laundry areas and everything to do with garbage and bathrooms.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** Use your creative powers to influence young minds for the better. Children should know that if you plant daisies, you get daisies. If you plant onions, you get onions. Our actions determine our future.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** This is the perfect day to clean up situations at home. At a physical level, they might be messy areas. At a more subtle level, they could be difficult family situations.

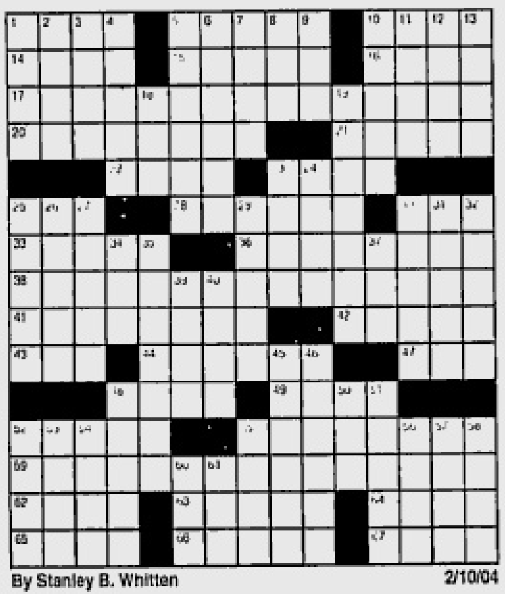
**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** You'll work carefully to investigate anything you do today with thoroughness and depth. It's as if you have X-ray vision!

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** Use your earning power to improve your immediate environment. Even tiny improvements that show your intention can be powerfully beneficial.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** This is a good day to make resolutions about improving your health. Begin by stopping something that is harmful to you, perhaps in your diet.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Your research abilities and investigative powers are extremely strong today. You will gather information about whatever you want to learn.

# DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

2/10/04

**ACROSS**

1 Enticement
5 Pueblo block
10 Enthusiastic
14 Arm bone
15 "St. Jerome in His Cell" engraver
16 Presley film, "__ Las Vegas!"
17 Huntsville complex
20 Exercise outfit
21 Castle or Dunne
22 Duel tool
23 Covers
25 Wharton Business School deg.
28 Translate an encryption
30 Terminate
33 Very unfamiliar
36 Hire again
38 Animated Beatles
41 Hunk picture
42 Observant one
43 Roush or Byrnes
44 Warbling sounds
47 UFO personnel
48 Cartoon Elmer
49 Addiction: suff.
52 Contemporary of Freud
55 Tidal waves
59 Wisconsin team
62 "National Velvet" writer Bagnold
63 Proprietor
64 QED part
65 Flophouse in London
66 Warn
67 Goes out with

**DOWN**

1 Folksinger Ives
2 Toward shelter
3 Of India: pref.
4 Discrimination
5 Worshipped
6 Scottish seaport
7 Mine finds
8 Arthur of "The Golden Girls"
9 Blunder
10 Declares
11 Clinging plant
12 Lendl of tennis
13 Carnegie or Earnhardt
18 Faucet
19 Jazz combo player
23 Leopold's partner in crime
24 Same as mentioned: Lat.
25 Possibly
26 Wash out
27 Suffered
29 Mean
30 Upper crust
31 Song for nine voices
32 Tinters
34 Santa's helper
35 Matins division
37 Paid athlete
39 Political division
40 Lose traction
45 Imperfect speaker
46 Dollar artist
48 Nourishes
50 Corporate abbr.
51 __ alive!
52 Brought to maturity
53 First 007 film
54 Hilo garlands
55 Newcastle's river
56 Slight
57 "Dies __"
58 Mach toppers
60 Long scarf
61 Hole-making tool

**Monday's Puzzle Solved**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | A | S | P | ■ | T | O | T | A | L | ■ | S | P | A | M |
| I | L | E | A | ■ | A | B | A | T | E | ■ | L | A | I | R |
| D | A | R | T | ■ | N | E | L | L | A | ■ | A | R | M | S |
| G | I | A | N | T | G | R | E | A | T | O | T | T | ■ | ■ |
| E | N | C | A | S | E | ■ | ■ | S | H | A | ■ | E | M | S |
| S | S | S | ■ | A | L | T | O | ■ | E | S | P | R | I | T |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | C | R | O | O | N | E | R | T | O | R | M | E |
| E | R | G | O | ■ | ■ | R | A | E | ■ | ■ | D | E | E | M |
| S | I | N | G | E | R | T | I | L | L | I | S | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| P | L | A | S | M | A | ■ | R | Y | A | N | ■ | P | G | A |
| Y | E | W | ■ | I | T | S | ■ | ■ | S | C | O | U | R | S |
| ■ | ■ | A | C | T | R | E | S | S | H | A | R | R | I | S |
| T | O | B | E | ■ | A | G | I | L | E | ■ | I | S | L | E |
| A | U | L | D | ■ | C | O | L | O | R | ■ | B | E | L | T |
| T | R | E | E | ■ | E | S | T | E | S | ■ | I | D | E | S |

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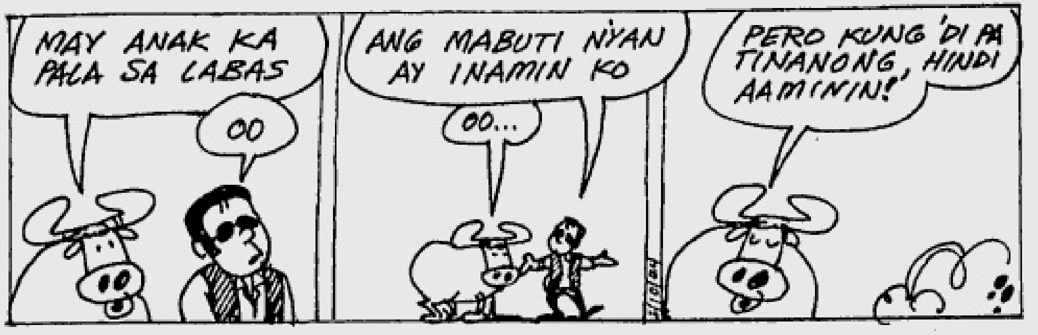
2/10/04

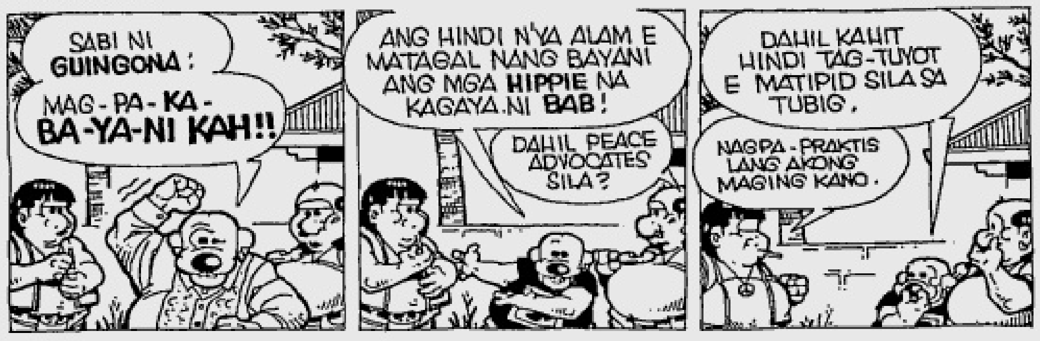
**A. LIPIN**

BY JESS ABRERA


MAY ANAK KA PALA SA LABAS
OO
ANG MABUTI NYAN AY INAMIN KO
OO...
PERO KUNG 'DI PA TINANONG, HINDI AAMININ!

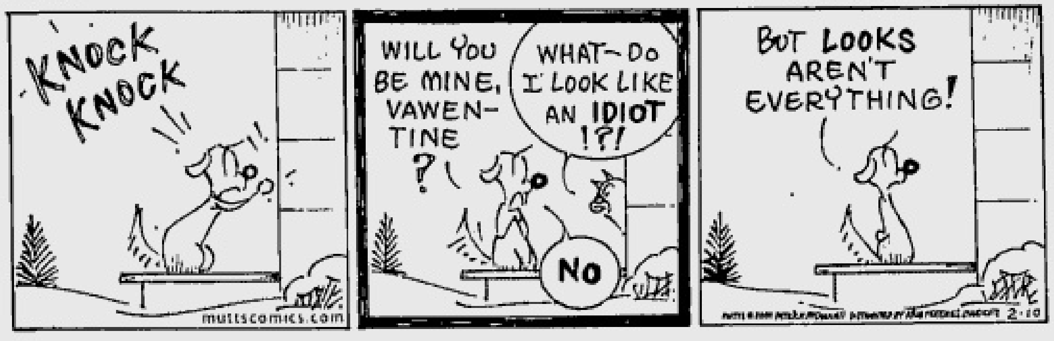
**PUGAD BABOY**

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SABI NI GUINGONA: MAG-PA-KA-BA-YA-NI KAH!!
ANG HINDI N'YA ALAM E MATAGAL NANG BAYANI ANG MGA HIPPIE NA KAGAYA NI BAB!
DAHIL PEACE ADVOCATES SILA?
DAHIL KAHIT HINDI TAG-TUYOT E MATIPID SILA SA TUBIG.
NAGPA-PRAKTIS LANG AKONG MAGING KANO.

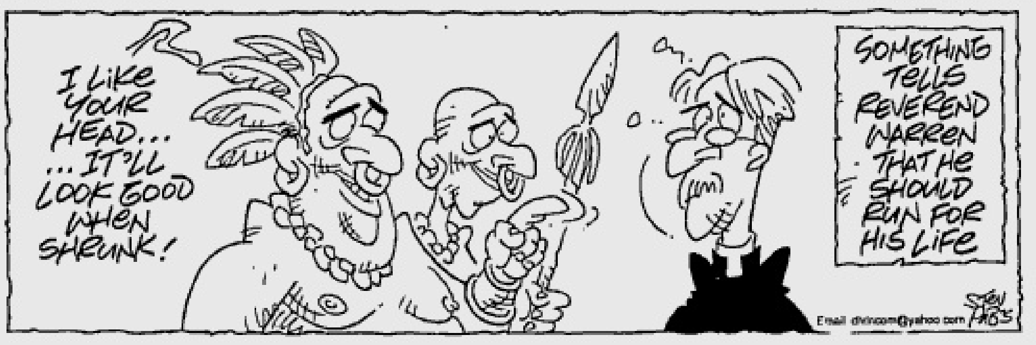
**MUTTS**

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


KNOCK KNOCK
WILL YOU BE MINE, VAWEN-TINE ?
WHAT-DO I LOOK LIKE AN IDIOT !?!
NO
BUT LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING!
muttscomics.com

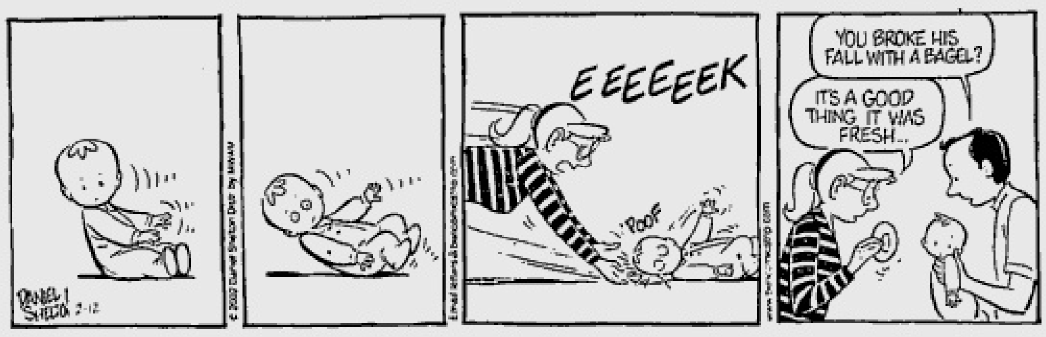
**DIVINE COMEDY**

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I LIKE YOUR HEAD... ...IT'LL LOOK GOOD WHEN SHRUNK!
SOMETHING TELLS REVEREND WARREN THAT HE SHOULD RUN FOR HIS LIFE
Email divincom@yahoo.com

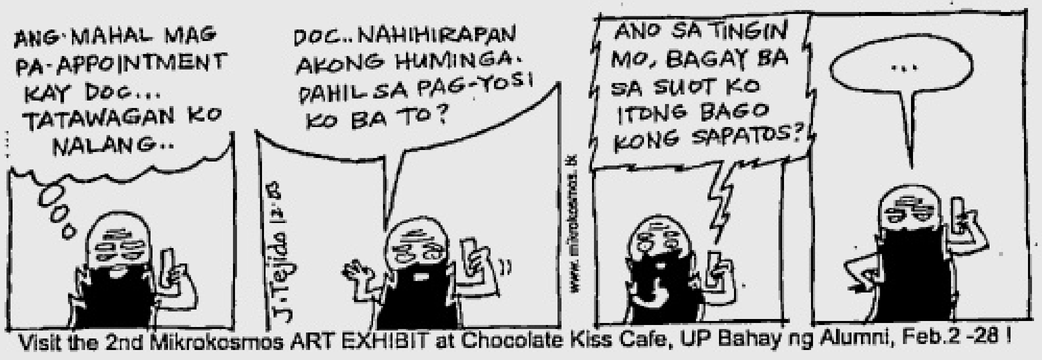
**BEN**

BY DANIEL SHELTON


EEEEEEK
POOF
YOU BROKE HIS FALL WITH A BAGEL?
ITS A GOOD THING IT WAS FRESH...

**MIKROKOSMOS**

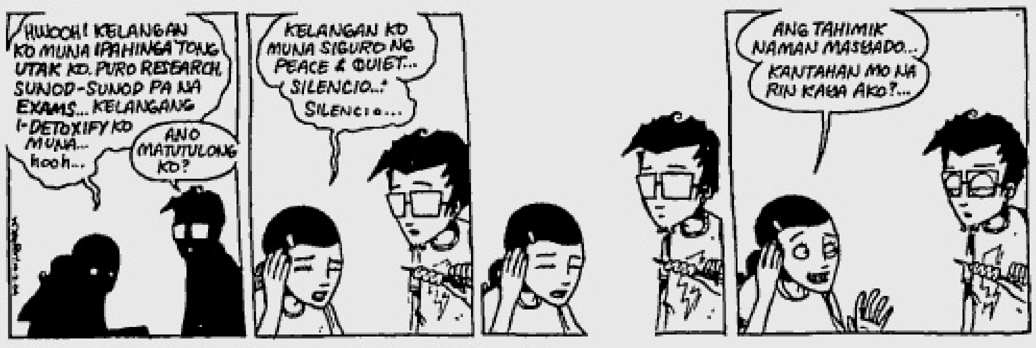
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG MAHAL MAG PA-APPOINTMENT KAY DOC... TATAWAGAN KO NALANG..
DOC.. NAHIHIRAPAN AKONG HUMINGA. DAHIL SA PAG-YOSI KO BA TO?
ANO SA TINGIN MO, BAGAY BA SA SUOT KO ITONG BAGO KONG SAPATOS?
...
J. Tejido
www.mikrokosmos.tk

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 !

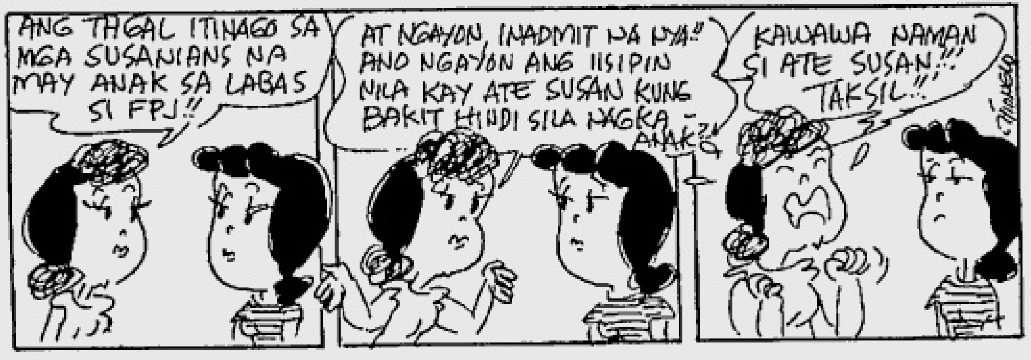
**KIKO MACHINE**

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH! KELANGAN KO MUNA IPAHINGA TONG UTAK KO. PURO RESEARCH. SUNOD-SUNOD PA NA EXAMS... KELANGANG I-DETOXIFY KO MUNA... hooh...
ANO MATUTULONG KO?
KELANGAN KO MUNA SIGURO NG PEACE & QUIET... SILENCIO..! SILENCIO...
ANG TAHIMIK NAMAN MASYADO... KANTAHAN MO NA RIN KAYA AKO?...

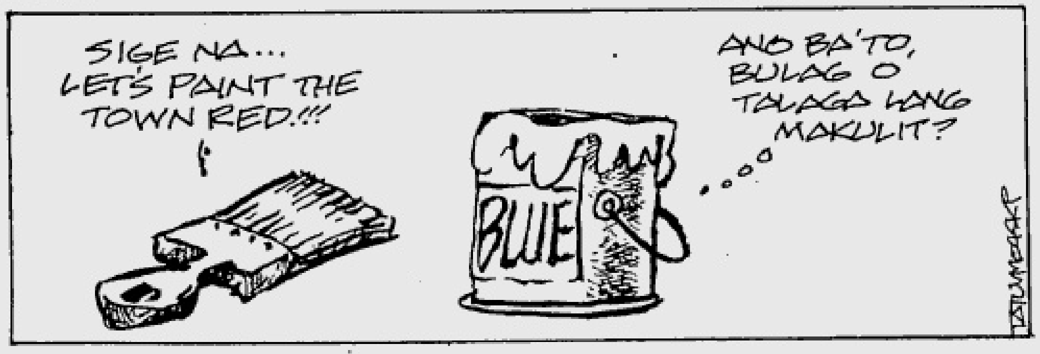
**LOVEKNOTS**

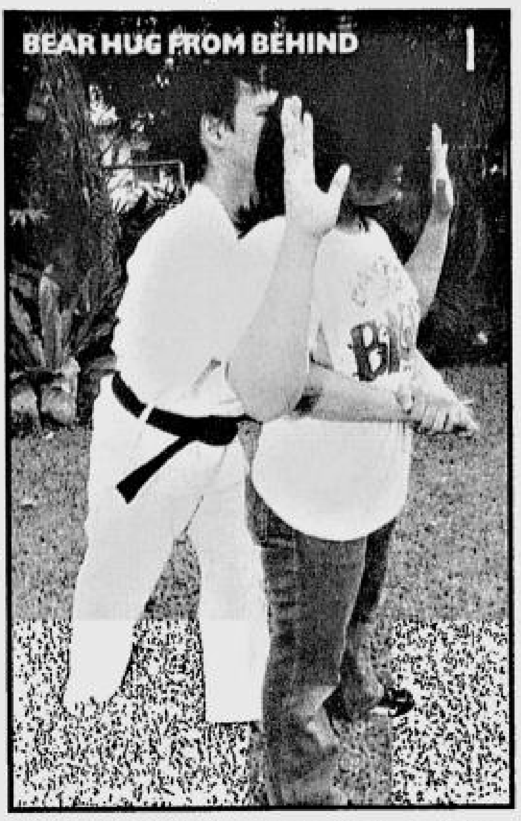
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG TAGAL ITINAGO SA MGA SUSANIANS NA MAY ANAK SA LABAS SI FPJ!!
AT NGAYON, INADMIT NA NYA!! ANO NGAYON ANG IISIPIN NILA KAY ATE SUSAN KUNG BAKIT HINDI SILA NAGKA-ANAK?!
KAWAWA NAMAN SI ATE SUSAN!!! TAKSIL!!

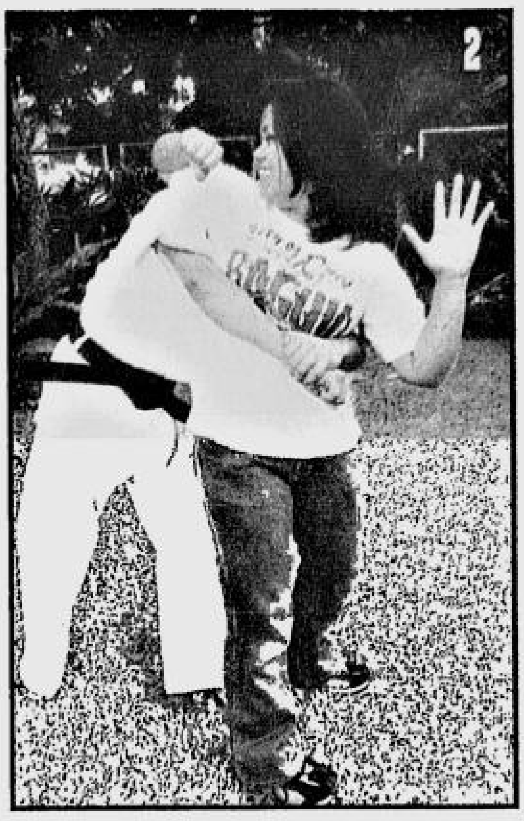
**TULDOK**

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

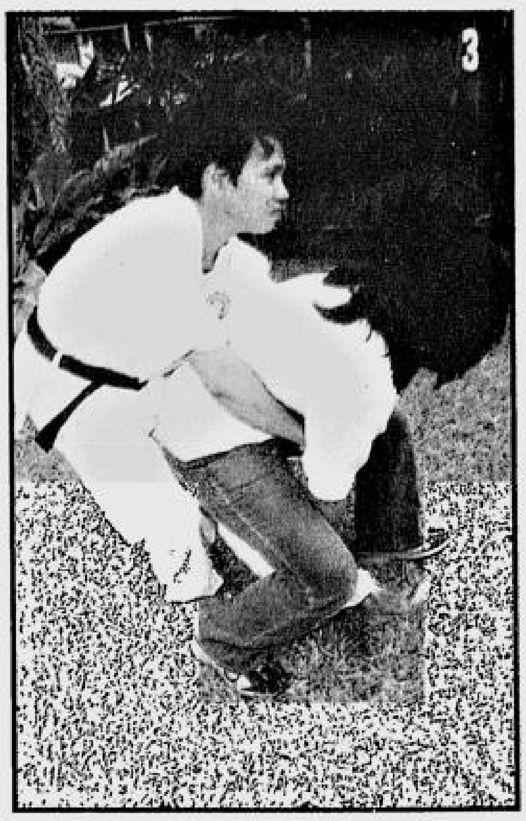

SIGE NA... LET'S PAINT THE TOWN RED!!!
ANO BA'TO, BULAG O TALAGA LANG MAKULIT?
BLUE



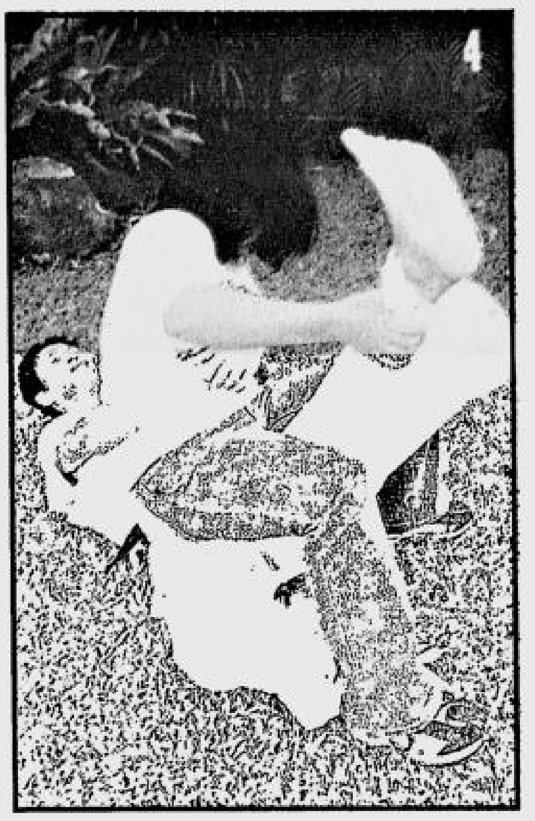
**WITH A BEAR HUG,** an attacker keeps you from moving .



**HIT** your assailant with your left elbow. Then hit him again with your right elbow.



**BEND** and grab your attacker's left leg.



**PULL** his leg up and fall over your attacker.

# Self-defense for you and me

From page D1

tomized classes are also offered for young and elderly women and male adults aged 25-50.

"It's all about becoming aware and empowered," says Vasquez, 43, who was named Grandmaster of the Year in the 2000 and 2001 United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame and National Training Camp. He was 15 when he took up martial arts.

A combination of kuntaw, karate, jujitsu, judo, arnis, kick-boxing and aikido, Dulac has been recognized as an indigenous sport by the Philippine Indigenous Games and Sports Savers Association, which is under the Philippine Tourism Authority.

"The association has 13 indigenous games," says Vasquez, who's also the vice president of the association.

## Inner awareness

According to Vasquez, the first thing to understand about martial arts is that, in its purest form, it is about inner awareness: mental discipline, concentration, physical balance, coordination, leverage and flexibility.

"In fact, the most successful fighters who specialize in the external fighting arts begin their training by learning these inner skills before they learn the more visually impressive ones," says Michael Puyat, who is currently learning the basics of Dulac.

A sports game, which involves four people against four opponents, Dulac is simple and easy to learn.

"It's a peaceful form of martial arts. We don't strike but defend. We're ready to strike back if necessary so we can save our lives or those of other people," Puyat says. "It requires intensive practice. Do it on your own until you learn it by heart."

Vasquez, together with Damaso Liwanag, Anthony dela Peña, Christopher Layron and Marlon Andaya, gives free Dulac demonstrations every Sunday, 5-9 p.m., at the Department of Tourism building in Manila. He and his group also conduct a five-hour course for women and professionals, wherein 25 situations are presented and participants are taught how to get out of such predicaments.

"Participants are taught how to be ready even without weapons, bodyguards, companions, guns and how to save themselves," says Vasquez.

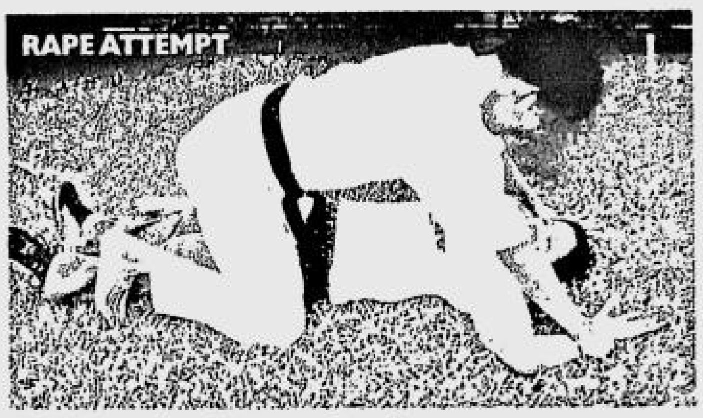
The five-hour course costs P2,000-4,000 per person, depending on the number of participants.

Vasquez shares the following self-protection tips:

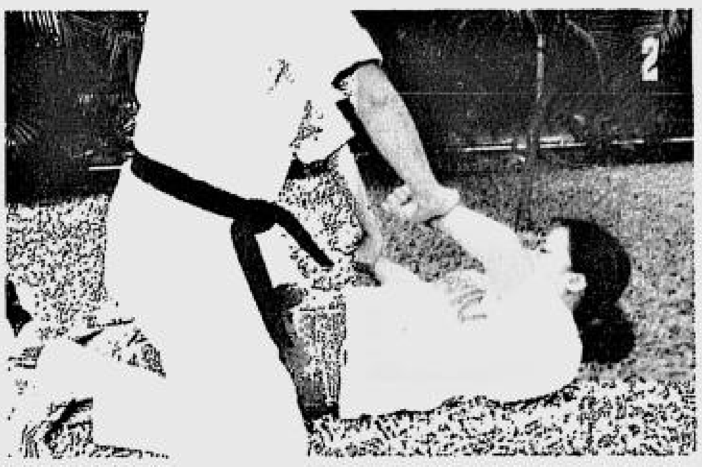
- Always be aware of your surroundings, regardless of the time of day.
- Follow your gut feel. "If you feel something's wrong then it's wrong," he says.
- Have your keys ready before approaching your car or the entrance of your home.
- Don't rummage through your purse in public.
- Never use a weapon you're unskilled in. "It's easy for an attacker to use it against you."
- Do not carry all your money in one spot.

*Dulac Practical Martial Arts may be reached at 8216060 or 0916-6481408 or e-mail info@superhome.com.ph.*

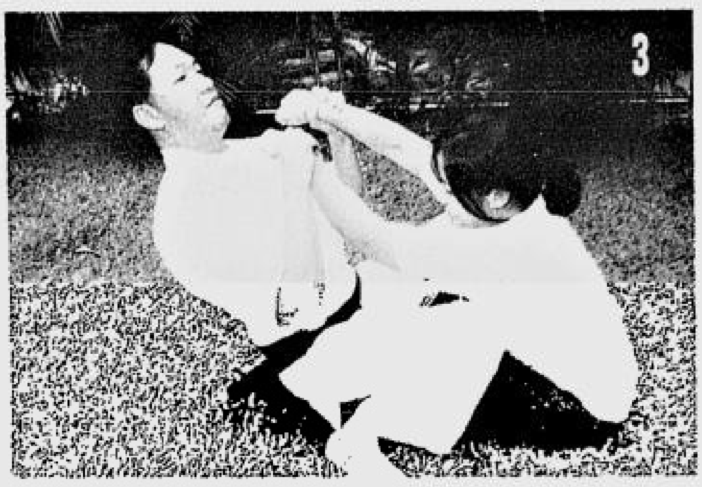
*E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph*



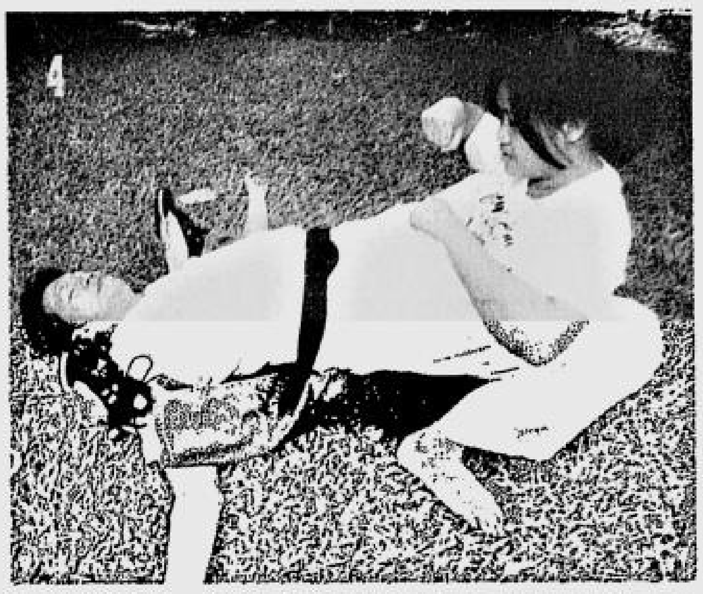
**GIVE** the attacker a false sense of security.



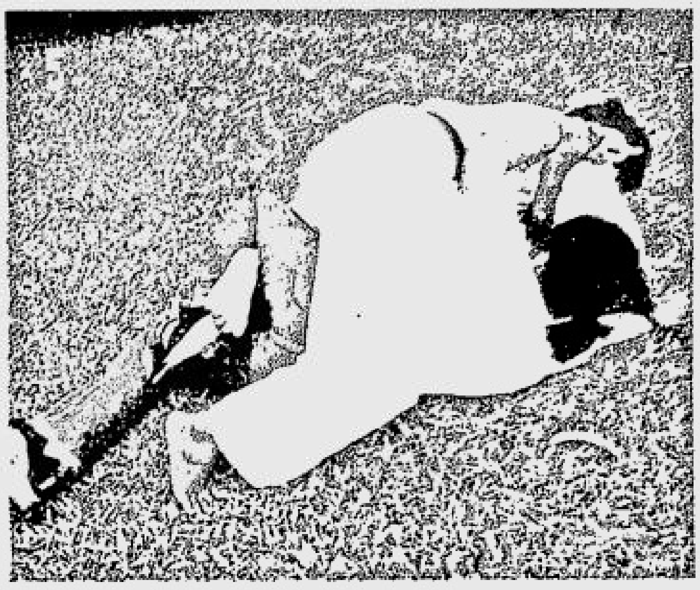
**TWIST** your forearms inward while pushing your attacker.



**QUICKLY** assume sitting position.



**LOWER** your elbows into attacker's knees and lock his arms with your feet.



**TWIST** your body to the right and push him to the ground.

---

# Enjoy the convenience of automated game tickets

TIMEZONE introduces Powertickets.

Tickets will now be credited electronically to a powercard and tickets won are automatically loaded onto the card for easy tracking and storage of points.

Already converted for the EZ ticket system are Timezone powercard centers like Greenbelt 3, Glorietta 2 and Glorietta 4, Alabang Town Center Main and Cinema areas, Greenhills Theater Mall and Megamall. Timezone Lipa and Cebu will follow soon.

Larry Panes, deputy general manager of Timezone, says the new system makes it easy for customers to track down points earned. They also do not have to carry bundles of tickets around wherever they go.

With Powertickets, claiming of ticket points is easy. At the end of each game, the number of power tickets won is displayed on the yellow electronic monitor at the redemption machine where the customer played. The total power ticket balance can be viewed by swiping the powercard through the balance station in Timezone counters.

A customer can redeem prizes by simply handing over the powercard to the cashier who has it electronically read.

Timezone Centers are at Glorietta 2, Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 1 and Greenbelt 3 of the Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center main and cinemas, SM Megamall, Starmall, Metropoint, Greenhills Theater, Pavilion Mall, Ayala Center Cebu and the newly opened SM Lipa, Batangas.

**TIMEZONE'S** Powertickets system makes it easy for customers to keep track of points earned.

**MORE** hours of fun with Powertickets

---

# *NBA's new star gets own line of sports gear*

LEBRON James, the American National Basketball Association's newest sensation, is also the latest endorser of Nike.

The 19-year-old nicknamed "The King," has dazzled the crowd in his first NBA season with his sensational dunks and no-look passes.

As a tribute to its new endorser, Nike has launched its LeBron James 2004 Spring-Summer Collection with apparel gear, bags, caps, socks and even game accessories like headbands and armbands. A LeBron James football jersey is also included in the collection, as the basketball star is also a big football fan.

Designers came up with a collection that was youth-inspired, which Nike called "retro-modern."

Visit the website at www.nikebasketball.com.ph.

**LEBRON** James is the latest Nike endorser.

# Liposuction: A first-hand experience

**By Kinny Salas**

I MAY live to be a hundred, but I will never forget the year 2003 or the events after my 33rd birthday.

While most of my closest friends are now married and have children, I took a different plunge. What did I always want for myself, I asked, that I could now get?

I thought about my big hips, thighs and lower abs, which have plagued me since grade school even when I was underweight.

I then decided to go for liposuction with none other than Dr. Vicki Belo, doctor to the stars, last August and September.

**Result:** I now have a bikini body—a sculpted figure with narrower curved hips, trim thighs, washboard abs and a higher behind.

It's a body programmed to gain weight first on the chest and buttocks area only. My pre-lipo measurements: 35.5-28-38. Post-lipo after three months: 37-24-34, with irregular exercise and no diet during the Christmas season!

You can imagine what I could have been had I been more disciplined.

I went in for two sessions, as Dr. Belo only did four areas max or four liters of fat (whichever came first) at a time.

In session one, my upper thighs went first—the inner, outer and front are considered three different areas, while the knee, if done, would count as four. I lost three or so inches all around.

The bonus was, Dr. Belo sculpted my butt by keeping the size at the fullest point but removing the bulge at the saddlebags and back of my upper thighs. I now have longer-looking slim thighs and a higher, rounded butt.

Session two dealt with the bane of my existence: hips and lower abdominals (*puson*). To make sure the fat didn't grow back around them, Dr. Belo lipo-ed my waist and upper abdominals as well.

The bonus here: my body/back size stayed the same but I went up one cup size, from B to C, as the fat now went there. The downside is, when sitting down and not wearing tight tops, I look top-heavy, and people tell me so!

Bra hunting is now a pain, as I have to make do with the available limited styles at high prices.

## Brave and daring

People called me brave and daring for agreeing to liposuction, but I didn't take the plunge just like that. I did my homework by researching on the topic.

Dr. Belo has performed around 10,000 lipo procedures (I kid you not) with no fatalities or injuries, and she does the new style with the Niera diode laser, which liquefies the fat first. This makes the suction process faster and less traumatic to the body.

Her cannulas, the metal rods inserted, are a lot smaller and thinner than the old ones—chopstick-thin rather than magic marker-thick. I was able to walk out of the clinic right after the procedure and bought the post-op medicine myself.

I understand that many other doctors still use the old lipo method, where they ram the thick cannula in and out to dislodge the stubborn fat, then suck it out. In this case, healing takes much longer and patients are confined to bed for at least a week.

I, on the other hand, was roaming the malls after only two days, binder and all. My doctor and her staff checked on me regularly via phone to make sure I was feeling okay. I was advised to walk around for exercise the day after the treatment to hasten healing.

## Misconceptions

**Great pain**—There was none! I was sedated and did not even feel anything when they injected me with local anesthesia. I was roused to shift positions, but even as I was conscious throughout, I didn't feel a thing. The post-operation pain was akin to that of workout muscle pain. Definitely tolerable.

**Instant Baywatch body**—No way. I was bloated with extra weight equivalent to seven pounds of water right after, but this subsided in three weeks. My ankles and knee turned purple for a week and the bones disappeared. Your actual body will emerge in three months after the swelling has fully subsided, but you can definitely wear smaller clothes after only a month.

**Huge stitches and scars**—Nope, stitches and incisions are the size of half a stapler bullet, and close on their own after 48 hours.

**Dripping buckets of blood**—There was very little blood. The liquid oozing from you for 24-48 hours max is actually anesthesia, mixed with blood, hence the color. Take note that when you actually bleed, the texture is thick and black-red in color. Here, the liquid is very watered down, hence the runny texture and bright red color.

The only hassle is wearing the body binder for 24 hours the first week and having to wash the stains for the first two days.

**You can now eat as much as you want**—Absolutely false. The truth is, if you are as lazy and gluttonous as you before the operation, pre-op fat will migrate somewhere else.

In my case, I ate like there was no tomorrow after the procedure, so my old 26-inch waist ballooned to 28, and my hips, which were 37, became 38 in a month and a half. Good thing I was scheduled to have those areas lipo-ed, too.

After my full stomach and hip lipo, I was more careful. Due to the holidays, though, I still pigged out, hence the new cup size. I noticed my scrawny arms filling out, too. Now, I'm working out big time and controlling my meals.

**Cellulite will disappear**—Cellulite cannot be eliminated by liposuction, but, yes, there is a marked improvement. Four free sessions of Endermologie is included in the package for cellulite removal and skin firming three months after lipo.

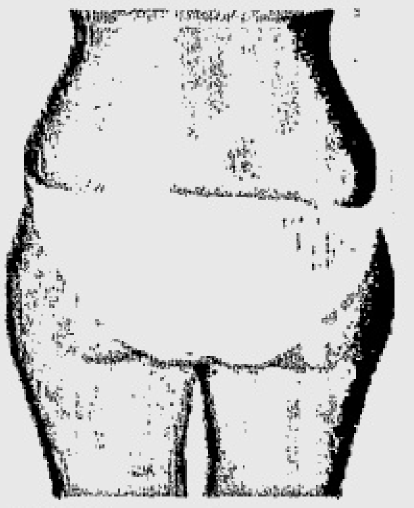
People ask me, "If you knew the hassle involved, would you do it again?"

And I always say, "In a heartbeat!"

I had exercised like a madwoman and dieted, but my hips were always big and my stomach never flat. I was scrawny everywhere else, but these stubborn areas were always out of proportion with the rest of my body.

The satisfaction and confidence I now feel are priceless. The hassle was such a small price to pay.

*E-mail the author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com or Dr. Vicki Belo at belomed@pacific.net.ph. Call the Belomed head office at 8177178.*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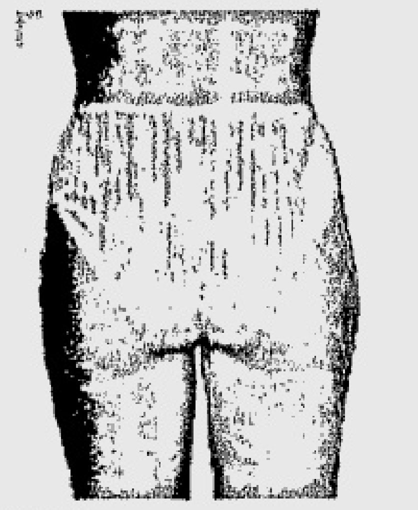
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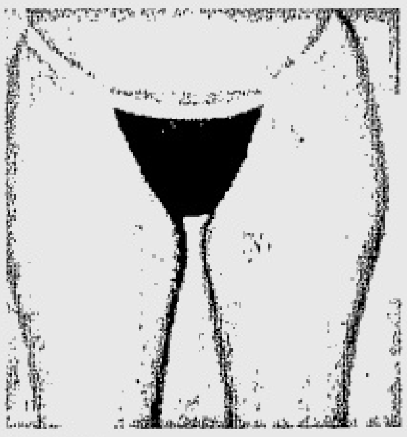
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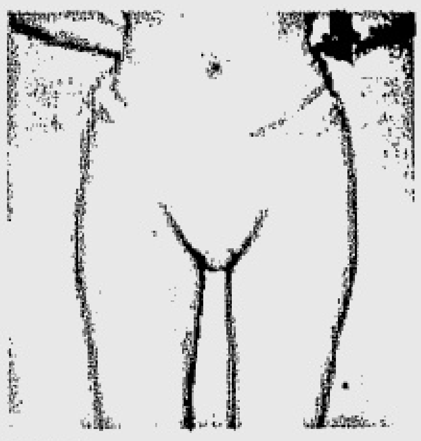
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# Flower power in new product

PROTECT your skin from the harmful effects of environmental factors with the help of new Perennials Intense Body Moisturizer from Nu Skin.

Intense heat from the sun, cold night breeze, dust and dirt—all this can damage the skin, causing dryness, roughness and flakiness.

Perennial Intense Body Moisturizer is the first all-over body lotion formulated with IBR-Dormin. It is derived from the Narcissus flower which contains elements with protective qualities to help build and store energy for skin renewal.

It helps preserve the complexion's cellular structure, moisture content and nutrient supply to better protect against daily environmental stress.

Nu Skin's Perennials Intense Body Moisturizer will help the skin increase its cellular durability and reinforce its natural defense mechanism.

It will protect the skin from damaging elements in the environment to preserve its beauty and health.

Contact Nu Skin Philippines Inc.'s Distributor hotline at 6890333 or log on to www.nuskin.com.ph

# *Skin care for smart women*

IMEDEEN, a leading skin-care supplement, is a smart way to complement a daily cleansing, toning and moisturizing routine. Discerning women know that to influence the quality and structure of the skin a more profound approach is needed with special skin care nutrients.

Imedeen developed the "skincare from within" and continues to innovate. For Imedeen Time Perfection, anti-oxidants lycopene and grapeseed extract were harnessed in the patented Lycophence GS formula designed to add a protective element to the moisturizing and anti-aging benefits of the biomarine complex for which Imedeen has exclusive worldwide rights.

In 2003, Imedeen Tan Optimizer, with a unique oil-based delivery system, LipoCap, was launched, providing a new and innovative approach to preparing the skin for the sun and tanning. All Imedeen products are backed by extensive scientific documentation.

Launched in 1991, Imedeen was the first skin-care supplement on the market and, after 13 years, considered one of the best. It is sold in over 50 countries.

Take Charge Doc!
Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.
MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)
What is a deductible? Do I have to pay for it?
Typically, "deductibles" do not apply to MEDICard's services as we guarantee outright coverage for covered illnesses. A deductible applies to other types of medical plans, such as indemnity (insurance) plans. It is the part of a member's eligible expenses that is paid (out of pocket) each year before their plan begins to cover a percentage of the eligible expenses.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Believed to be one of the only two female practicing Urologists in the country is MEDICard accredited specialist, Dr. Ma. Immaculada Corazon C. Unabia. Doc Mikee, who also subspecializes in Female Urology, is based in St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. She finished her studies in Medicine at the De La Salle University and then took her residency for her specialization in Urology at East Avenue Medical Center. She earned her training for her subspecialty at the Singapore General Hospital. Members may visit her for their consultation needs at Room 201 of the Medical Arts Bldg. every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 1 to 3 PM.

Contract Signing

LOVE KO 'TO: McDonald's Philippines (Golden Arches Dev't. Corp.) one of the country's leading fastfood restaurants signed the renewal of its healthcare program with MEDICard last January 23 at the company's Head Office in Makati City. (Seated L-R) Romeo Bachoco (McDonald's Sr. VP-Finance), Luis Montoya (MEDICard EVP & GM), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (MEDICard Pres.), Hector Jaraza (McDonald's HR Dir.) & Dr. Nicky Montoya (MEDICard Med. Dir.) Standing (L-R) are MEDICard's Voltaire Victoria (Mktg. & Sales Mngr.), Pia Reyes (Corp. Accounts Mngr.) & Miriam Villafuerte (Mktg. Services Mngr.), Ronald McDonald, Imelda Villegas (MEDICard Account Exec.) & Joan Manalo (McDonald's HR Consultant)

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 812-8360, 817-5136 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

TEXT MEDICARD: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N' Text).
VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asia Pacific Region to be ISO CERTIFIED

Advt.

**FIRST-CLASS** spa amenities at the Edsa Shangri-La Health Club

# Lifestyle of comfort and fitness

EDSA Shangri-La introduces a lifestyle concept revolving around fitness, relaxation and comfort.

The new Edsa Shangri-La Health Club, designed and executed by PDP Architects, has a water feature in the jacuzzi and cold plunge area. Subdued cream walls, plants and stone accents were chosen to evoke calm and serenity. Copper glass mosaic tiles are featured in the shower rooms, and blue glass mosaic tiles, modernized faucets and wash vessels in the hand washing area.

Edsa Shangri-La's new health club offers state-of-the-art equipment for cardiovascular and resistance training such as the Life Fitness Treadmill 95TI, one of the first in the Philippines. The spring surface floor in the gymnasium enhances the fitness experience.

The cushioned flooring reduces impact on the joints and muscles.

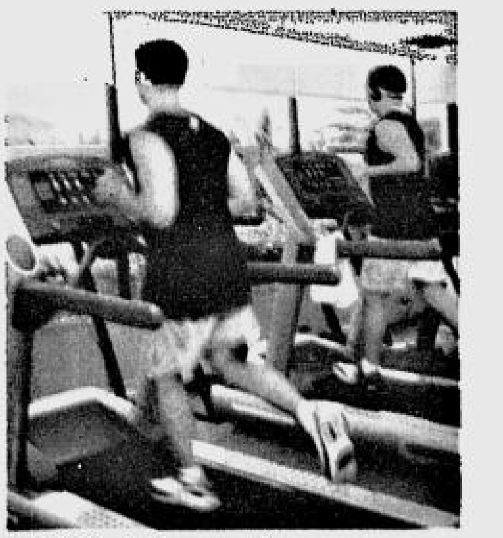
Club visitors have free use of leisure facilities such as nova-flex paved tennis courts, Jacuzzi, cold plunge, sauna and a lagoon-shaped swimming pool. The poolside has exotic teak wood furniture from Sumatra, Indonesia.

Bath and shower facilities, complimentary towel service, a lounge area, refurbished locker rooms and efficient service from well-trained staff enhance comfort and convenience.

Club members enjoy preferred rates on massage services and world-class spa therapy.

Edsa Shangri-La spa offers two new luxury body treatments—Java Bee Lulur Royal and the Balinese Boreh. The Javanese lulur, a ritual from the royal palaces of Central Java, Indonesia, is a mix of natural ingredients and spices for exfoliating, relieving bruises, muscle and joint pains; cooling the body, uplifting and stimulating. Boreh uses paste of natural ingredients to refresh and restore the skin's pH balance, leaving it smooth and supple.

Other treatments available are Aromatherapy Massage, Lavender Lift Facial, Hair and Scalp Treatment, Micro-Sea Body Mask, Aromatherapy Sea Salt Body Scrub, Aromatherapy, Toning Thalassotherapy Bath, Swedish Massage, Shiatsu and Combination Massage. Call 6338888 locals 2901-2904.


**A NEW** kind of gym experience